

PLUCK AND LUCK

STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

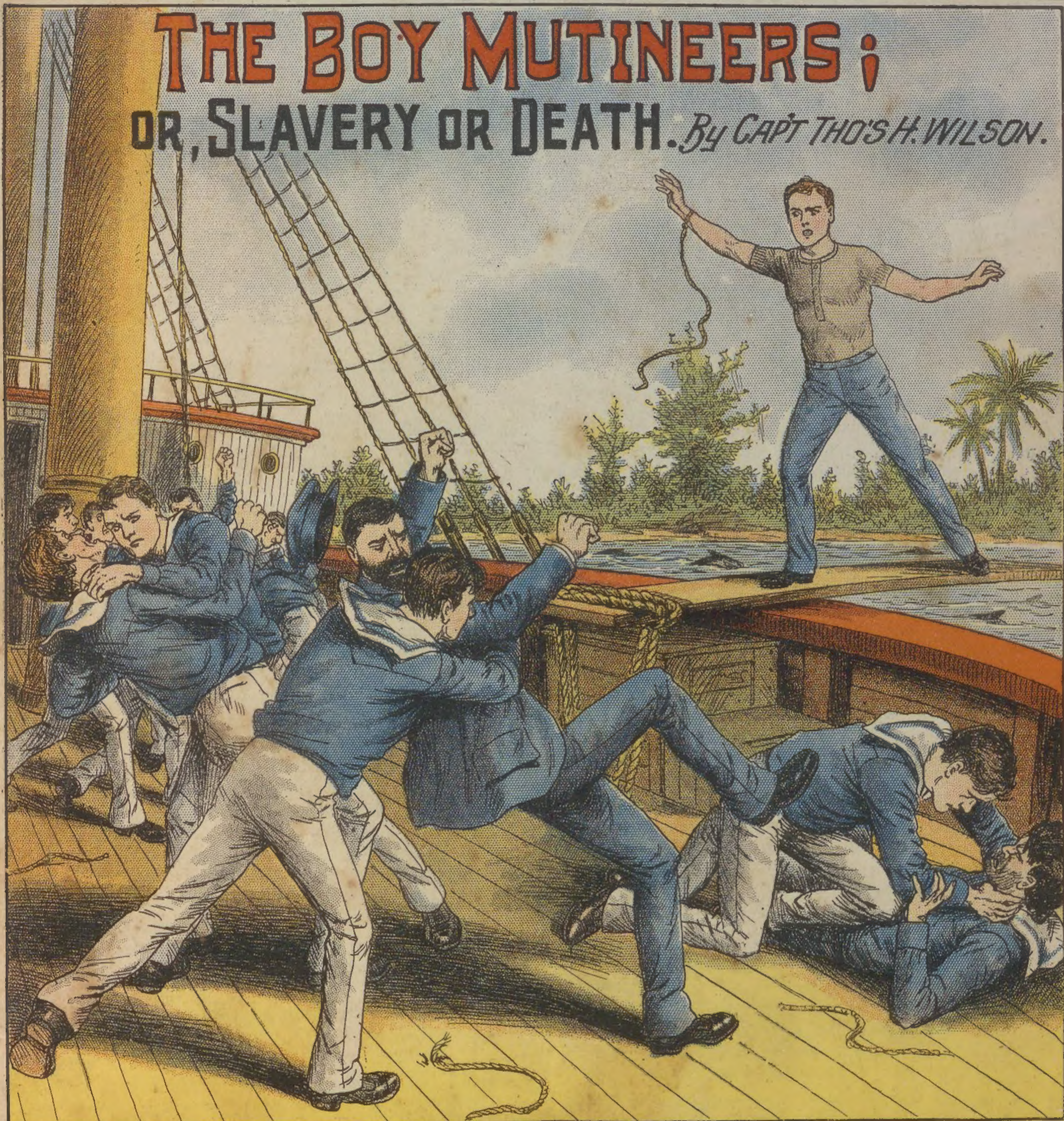
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THE BOY MUTINEERS; OR, SLAVERY OR DEATH. *By CAPT THO'S H. WILSON.*



Every man, including Captain Lawrence himself, was seized from behind, and hurled to the deck with such violence as to almost take their breath. Before they could comprehend what had happened, they were again prisoners and the boy mutineers masters of the ship.

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THE BOY MUTINEERS

OR,

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BY CAPTAIN THOS. H. WILSON.

CHAPTER I.

SLAVERY OR DEATH.

"Aloft, aloft, you young lubber."

"Captain——"

"Hush—not a word, dog!—aloft and reef that main topsail, or I will lash you to the mast and flog you."

"I am sick, captain——"

"Not a word out of you, you dog, you slave! Are you not one of the watch?"

"But I am not fit for duty."

"You lie, you impudent little cur. Aloft, or I will have you flogged within an inch of your life."

The sea was rough and the vessel rolled and plunged as she ploughed her way through the foam-crested waves, and the boy was so sick and dizzy that he could scarce stand. He was a pale lad, having just risen from a sick bed, and was wholly unfit for duty. But he had such a dread of Captain Lawrence, who was hated and feared by the crew, that he determined to try to go aloft.

Weak and trembling he climbed from spar to spar, sometimes so faint and sick that he scarce could keep himself from falling. Often he was compelled to pause and rest, and then the brutal captain standing beneath him would swear that he would shoot him for mutiny if he did not obey.

Standing near the forward gangway was another youth about the same age of the sick lad who had been sent aloft. His brave young heart almost melted at the outrage, and dangerous as it was to approach the captain when he was angry, Tom Jones went to him and said:

"Captain Lawrence, let me go aloft in Jack's place."

"What, you young dog, do you dare to interfere with my commands?" cried the captain, his eyes flashing with increased rage.

"No, captain, but Jack Errol has been sick——"

"Mind your own business!"

"He is really not able——"

"You won't, won't you?" and the enraged captain seized the brave, generous lad by the shoulder, hurled him against the mainmast and kicked him down the hatchway. "I will have you all understand who is master aboard this ship!" he shouted, white with fury, shaking his fist at a group of terrified

sailors who had gathered on the forward deck. "I am your master, and you are slaves, every one of you, slaves! Do you understand that?"

Then he walked aft, where he halted near the cabin and turned his eyes up to the sick lad, who was manfully trying to perform the task he had been ordered to perform.

"Sick, is he, eh?" the captain hissed through his half-closed lips. "Maybe he might faint up there, lose his hold and fall—ha, ha, ha, ha! What difference would it make? Break his neck, of course, or drown him in the sea, but what difference would it make? I get five thousand if he never returns alive—ha, ha, ha! Let the dogs show their teeth, if they dare, and I will hang every one of them to the yardarm!"

Captain Lawrence was known as a hard master. His crew dreaded him, and on this voyage he had seemed more cruel than usual. Some of the sailors thought he must be drinking too much grog, as they had never known him to be so hard on them before. He walked the deck for hours at a time during a gale, swearing at the wind, and making the men on duty perform feats which seemed almost impossible.

He entertained special hatred for the sailor lad, Jack Errol. Jack was on his first voyage, having been sent to sea by his uncle, with whom he was living, for Jack was an orphan boy. His father had been master of a ship, and was lost at sea while Jack was an infant, and then his mother died, and he went to live with his uncle, Isaac Errol, in Baltimore. His Uncle Isaac had three sons and two daughters of his own, and though he was a rich man he found that there was no room at his house for his brother's child. Jack occupied a menial position in the household, and though his father had left him a considerable amount of property, he was left in ignorance of the fact.

His Uncle Isaac at last concluded that it was necessary for the future welfare of his dead brother's child that he should go to sea. So he made arrangements with Captain Lawrence of the good ship Betsy Ann, which was fitting out for a voyage to the East Indies, to take Jack along. The lad was seized with a fever the second day out, and after several weeks was at last able to be on deck.

The Betsy Ann was now in the Pacific Ocean, and Jack, as we have seen, was convalescent, but wholly unfit for duty, when he was sent aloft in the gale.

"Well, I believe he'll succeed and get down with a whole

neck after all," the captain remarked, as he saw Jack Errol, who, having completed his task, start down among the rigging. "Well—well, he may get off this time, but I will yet see to it, Jack Errol, that you never get back to Baltimore."

He watched the pale, trembling youth as he reached the deck and went below to his quarters.

Jack was groping his way along under hatches, when he heard a groan.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"It's me, Jack."

"Tom—Tom Jones, what's the matter?"

"Did you make the reef, Jack?"

"Yes, but it was almost too much for me. I couldn't have stayed another minute up there; it made me so sick and dizzy I came nearly falling. But what's the matter with you, Tom?"

"I am hurt."

"Who hurt you?"

"The capen struck me, threw me against the mainmast, and kicked me down the hatchway."

"Why, Tom, what did he do that for?"

"Because I offered to go aloft for you when I saw that you were too sick and weak to do it without danger o' fallin'."

"He's a brute!" cried Jack Errol, in a voice that was husky with ill-concealed rage. "He's nothin' but a brute. No human being would send me up there when I could scarce walk."

"He swears that we are his slaves," said Tom.

"So we are."

It was too dark for the boys to distinctly make out each other's features, but Tom thought he could see Jack Errol's eyes flash with fire as he gave utterance to the short sentence quoted above. Slavery! At the very thought the lads gritted their teeth.

Several moments passed in silence, and then Jack Errol, who was a boy of great spirit, seemed to rise above boyhood and weakness, and cried:

"Oh, Tom, Tom, how can we stand it? Slaves, his slaves! I won't stand it!"

"Better keep a close mouth messmate," said a voice but a short distance away.

Both boys started up from the bale of goods on which they had been sitting with exclamations of alarm. Jack knew that he had said enough to forfeit his life, should his words be conveyed to the captain's ears. Both were trembling like aspen leaves, when a sailor rose from a pallet where he had been lying and said:

"Don't ye fear me, messmates. It's not in Luke Tyrrol's make-up to blow on a shipmate. No, blast my top-riggin' ef I'll ever give ye away, but, Jack, ye'd better not talk that way afore anybody else."

"It's all true, Luke," Jack answered. "I can't stand it any longer."

"D'ye want ter swing at the yardarm, shipmate?" asked Luke in a hoarse whisper, as he seized Jack's hand.

"Better die than live a life of slavery."

"If the captain hears ye, he'll have no mercy on ye, Jack, 'cause he's got no love for ye. I've seen that all along. Don't ye know sich talk is mutiny, and mutiny is death?"

"I know it, Luke, but I'm not the only one he treats like a dog. He flogs all of us, and without any cause, too. We'd better hang at the yardarm than be slaves."

"Hush—lad—don't talk that way. Ye speak too loud. Bill Collins ain't far away, an' ef he hears ye, shiver my timbers ef he don't give it away to the capen, and then ye'll swing. Better go slow."

"What do you mean, Luke?"

"Don't ye be talkin' anything about mutiny, leastways not quite so loud, or someone'll hear it," and with this cautiously

whispered advice Luke Tyrrol crept from the hold to the deck above, as it was his time to go on duty.

The two boys sat several moments after he had been gone, each silent and thoughtful. Jack's thinking, however, was to some purpose. He had seemed to read the heart of his captain, and concluded that it was his determination to murder the members of his crew, whom he hated.

"Tom," he at last whispered, "let us do it!"

"Do what?" asked Tom.

"Seize the ship, and make Captain Lawrence leave it."

"What—mutiny! Why, shipmate, we would swing for that."

"Well, it will be death anyway. If we must die, let it be like brave men, and not like cowardly slaves."

Tom thought a moment on the subject, and at last said:

"Well, Jack, we would certainly bring down the vengeance of Captain Lawrence on us, and be sure to fail."

"Fail!" cried Jack, in a voice that had a manly ring in it.

"I tell you, messmate, that for the brave and determined there is no such a word as fail. We can succeed!"

"Even if we did what would we do?" Tom asked. "We would be mutineers, and regarded as but little better than pirates. We'd never dare go into port, and cruisers would be sent after us, unless—unless——"

"Unless what, Tom?"

"Unless we took Captain Lawrence's life."

Jack shuddered at the bare thought of taking human life. All that Tom said he fully realized and appreciated. The boy heaved a sigh and then asked:

"Then, Tom, what are we to do? We cannot live out our term in this manner. He will kill us. Can we not desert at the first port?"

"No; he always keeps a close watch on those who would be liable to desert. They will not be allowed to go ashore."

Jack groaned. He knew that the great ocean would soon be his grave, and he was ready to welcome friendly death which would release him from slavery.

In order to turn their thoughts from their own gloomy condition the boys, who had been acquaintances and friends but a few weeks, began to relate their past history to each other. Jack's life we have already sketched. Tom's was somewhat similar; we give it in his own words, as he told it to Jack.

"My earliest recollections," he said, "were of being on shipboard. My father was a captain, and had taken mother and I on a cruise with him. Three or four years later mother, my baby sister, and I went with father on another cruise, and our ship was burned at sea. In the hurry to escape I was put in a different boat from my parents and little sister. For many days we were on the water, and came near perishing, but were at last picked up by a passing vessel, and I came near dying. The boat in which my parents and little sister were was never heard from, and they beyond a doubt died miserable deaths."

Jack had listened to his sad story to the end, and was about to say something to console his noble-hearted friend for his sad bereavement, when the hateful voice of Captain Lawrence was heard at the gangway.

"Below there, you dogs! On deck with you, or I will come down with a cat-o-nine and drive you up like a herd of swine!"

"Oh, mercy!" gasped Tom, whose sides still ached from the chastisement he had received. "He will surely murder us!"

"Come on, Tom, and if you do fear him don't show it," said Jack, his proud spirit seeming to make strong his frail body.

"I will! The tyrant shall not see me tremble!"

"Below there—ahoy!" cried the captain at the upper gangway.

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the response of the boys.

"Come on deck, or I'll make you wish you had no backs, you lazy dogs!"

The two sailor lads bounded up the companion-ladder, and the captain, who stood at the top with a short piece of rope in his hand, struck each of them a blow as they came up.

Though smarting under the blow, and burning with humiliation, Jack Errol uttered no word of complaint. Silent and sullen as convicts, the sailors gathered about the main hatchway to wait orders. The wind was blowing quite a gale, and Jack, whose blood had been thinned by sickness, shivered as the sharp wind whistled through his jacket.

"Man the braces, you dogs, reef every sail, or the mast will go by the board!" thundered the captain.

Jack Errol was standing near the larboard gunwale clinging to one of the shrouds, so weak that he scarce could maintain his position while the ship rolled from side to side.

No one could understand what object Captain Lawrence had in changing the ship's course, but there was not a sailor or officer dared offer any protest.

"What are you doing there, you lazy lubber? Aloft among the shrouds!" yelled the captain, rushing at Jack with his hand raised for a blow. At this moment a larger wave than usual struck the vessel's side, and pitched it in the opposite direction with such force that the captain fell against Jack and knocked him over the gunwale into the waves below.

CHAPTER II.

THE MUTINY.

"Man overboard! Man overboard! Lay to!" cried Tom, who had witnessed the deliberate attempt of Captain Lawrence to murder the youth. At the same moment Tom seized a hen-coop and threw it overboard.

"What do you mean?" roared the infuriated captain, who began to fear that his would-be victim would be rescued. "I command here, and not you."

But Tom heard not a word he said. Next moment he had leaped over the side of the vessel, and was among the waves.

As they were changing the course of the vessel at the moment Jack was thrown overboard, the ship had moved but a very short distance from the time that event had transpired until Tom was also in the water.

Jack had just time to sink once and come to the top, when Tom seized him and dragged him on the hen-coop.

The sailors had heard the sharp command of Tom, and pretending to believe that it was from the captain, had lowered a boat before the ill-natured master could comprehend what they intended doing.

"Hold there, you dogs, you lubbers, you thieves, slaves," he shouted, stamping his foot upon the deck, while he frothed at the mouth in rage; but the sailors picked up the lads and brought them safely aboard.

Captain Lawrence, finding himself thwarted in this matter, became more tyrannical than ever. He hardly dared take life, but he did everything to make Jack miserable.

The other sailors noticed it, and soon whispers went about among them. Luke Tyrrol was regarded as a brave, prudent man, and his advice was sought, but he carefully avoided giving any opinion.

Several days had passed since the events above recorded—days filled with anguish and suffering, brought about by the tyranny of the captain. It was late one night when Jack came off his watch and went aft, where several of his comrades, Tom among the others, were assembled.

"I tell you, boys, I can't stand it any longer, nor I won't!" said Jack. His shoulder was still smarting under a blow from the captain.

A moment the group of young sailors was silent, and then one of them asked:

"Well, what are we going to do, Jack?"

"Mutiny!" he whispered.

No one started at this bold whisper, as they would have done a few days before, for mutiny had been on their minds for some time.

"When?" Tom asked.

"Now—this very night."

"What do you propose ter do?" one of the sailors ventured to ask.

"To seize the ship, make Captain Lawrence, his mates, the steward, and supercargo, and all that stand in with the captain prisoners. We'll not hurt anybody if we can help it—but I am determined to be a slave no longer."

"What'll ye do with 'em, shipmate?"

"Put 'em in a boat and set 'em adrift in the ocean, and let 'em shift for themselves. Give them plenty water and provisions, but no arms."

"And what'll we do?"

"We will have to go to some island and live. It would be better to be marooned on some desert island than be a slave and beaten like slaves."

His companions were thoughtful a moment, and at last Tom said:

"Jack's right."

"In course he is," put in another.

"Let's stand by him," responded a third.

"You bet we will," a fourth answered.

"Now, shipmates, we understand each other," said Jack, after carefully surveying the part of the ship in which they were congregated, to make sure that no one was listening. "Let us talk business."

"Ay, ay, lads, talk business," said another.

"How many of you have pistols? I have a revolver and two boat pistols. So has Tom. How many of the others are armed?"

By a careful inspection it was ascertained that all save two had some kind of firearms, and Jack and Tom supplied them.

"Now we will have the captain, his mates, the steward, supercargo, and probably Bill Collins and Jake Watson against us. All the others will be our friends. We must arm ourselves by midnight and assemble at the mainmast. The signal will be a blow upon the mast with a hammer. As soon as you hear it all must get to places. Four will go to Captain Lawrence's cabin and seize him while he's in bed, and the others look after the rest. Get your weapons."

"Py shemany, I vos god 'im now," said Jake Brinesky, a young German sailor, holding up his revolver.

"So have we," answered five or six others, displaying dark, ugly-looking muzzles and glittering barrels.

"All be ready, for we are not going to fail," said Jack.

It was then thought best to disperse, as they might be discovered in their conference, and all their hopes blasted.

As Jack was hurrying from the spot he discovered a dark object behind a coil of rope. It tried to escape, but in a moment he was at its side and had placed his pistol against the man's head.

"Stand still, you coward! Don't you try to move, or I will blow your brains out!" he hissed in a low whisper.

"Yah, mine frient, dot ish so, und if ye don'd geep von tongue sthills as nefer vas pefore, py shemany Christmas, I vill kill you right deat mit my gun, sure!" and Jake Brinesky leveled a formidable-looking boat pistol at the culprit's head.

Jack was not slow to make out the eavesdropper as Bill Collins, one of the most treacherous and despicable of all the crew.

"D—d—don't shoot me!" the prisoner stammered.

"Then make no outcry."

"W—what do you mean? W—why were you taking me a prisoner?"

"You were eavesdropping."

"N—no, I wasn't."

"Py shemany Christmas, don'd you go for to beliefin' dot you undherstand him, he vill dell von lies," said Jake.

"No, I don't believe him, Jake, but what are we to do with him?"

At this moment Tom and a sailor named Ned came up.

"What shall we do with Bill, Tom?" Jack asked.

"Kill him," said Ned.

But the other boys would not think of such a thing. After some little discussion on the matter it was decided to take him aft, tie him and leave Ned as his guard. Ned, who had a grudge against Bill, would much have preferred to put an end to him and throw him overboard, but Jack and Tom were determined not to shed blood if it could be avoided.

The prisoner was taken aft and left under his guard.

Midnight, the hour for making the bold stroke, is approaching, and the boy mutineers who had inaugurated this plan for freedom are busy. Tom is quite pale and nervous, but Jack, who seems to have suddenly regained his health and strength, is as cool as if he was engaged in the most ordinary enterprise.

They had now gone too far to recede. It was death to back out, and their only hope was in the desperate game they were playing.

Luke Tyrrol, who has not been in their conference, is at last found sitting on a coil of rope. Jack cautiously approaches him, and says:

"Well, Luke, the die is cast. We have determined to make a bold stroke for liberty."

He turned about and gazed into Jack's face a moment, and asked:

"Shipmate, d'ye mean it?"

"Yes; won't you join us?"

The sailor shook his head.

"Yer goin' too far, shipmate, but shiver my timbers if I kin blame ye much, though. It's slavery or death."

"It's both slavery and death if we remain under Captain Lawrence's command, and it may be freedom and life if we mutiny. Won't you help us at midnight strike a blow for freedom?"

But Luke still shook his head. He had been a sailor all his life, and accustomed to obeying the commands of his superior officers, so he could not think at this stage of the game of mutiny.

"Shiver my timbers, messmate, if I'll do anything against ye. I believe ye lads kin do it alone without me, but I can't, right at first, help ye."

All attempts at persuasion failed, and they were forced to leave Luke alone.

In the meanwhile all is excitement. The boys, with fluttering hearts, hasten to their bunks to seize such weapons as they have, and the nearer the appointed hour arrives the more they are excited over the coming event.

"Boys, it's for life or death," says Jack, as he buckles a saber which he has found about his waist. "It's liberty or death, don't you forget that."

"We know it," responded Tom.

"Py tunder, gife me dot death betther than zo much as lifing von slave mit dot capen vot ve haf already got."

"You are right, Jake," said Jack, "death is preferable to

a life of slavery. We are going to fight for liberty, but be careful of one thing, lads, don't take human life if it can be avoided."

"Oh, yes, we understand."

It lacked but a few moments for the bells to strike, which was to be the warning signal for their assembling. Suddenly Tom, who was nearest the hatchway, said:

"Whist!"

"What? Tom, do you hear something?" said Jack, in alarm.

"Yes; footsteps running from the stern where Bill Collins is a prisoner. He has been discovered."

"Quick, boys, not a moment to lose," cried Jack, drawing his sword. "Up on deck! and remember, now, it is liberty or death."

Like lightning he ran up the companion ladder, followed by half a dozen companions. Just as he gained the deck, Joe Watson ran against him.

"On deck, ahoy!" roared Joe. "Mutineers."

"Silence," cried Jack, striking at him with his sword. Joe dodged him, and screamed:

"Captain Lawrence, Captain Lawrence, here are mutineers."

"Down with him!" cried Jack, rushing at him with his sword.

Bang! bang! went three or four pistols, and Joe fell to the deck. For a single second the boy mutineers paused appalled at their work, and then Jack, realizing that their success depended on instantaneous action, cried:

"Ho, lads! don't lose a moment now. Arrest all the others. Jake, Tom, this way for the captain's cabin."

A wild huzzah went up from the deck, and the mutineers scattered to their various places of action, to strike the enemy as soon as they could. Two of the worst had been put out of the way, and they had but five more to deal with.

Captain Lawrence's cabin was well aft the main gangway, while his friends were in the forward part of the ship. At the very moment the war-cry was raised by the mutineers Tuttle, the mate, was in the fore-castle, leaning over the gunwale and not dreaming of danger.

A young sailor named Davis led the mutineers against the mate whose cruelty had scarce been equaled by Captain Lawrence, while Jack, Tom, and Jake ran to the captain's cabin.

The boys reached it, and were about to force an entrance, when the door suddenly flew open of its own accord, and before them, pistol in hand, stood Captain Lawrence, his face dark as a thundercloud.

CHAPTER III.

THE TABLES TURNED.

"Dogs—what does this mean?" thundered the captain.

"Surrender!" cried Jack, waving his sword above his head.

"Ho, a mutiny, is it? Take that!" and leveling his pistol at Jack's face, he fired.

The sailor lad had noted the movement of his arm, and knowing that his life depended on his warding off the shot, struck up the pistol with his sword just as the finger of the captain touched the trigger.

Even then the escape was a narrow one, the bullet barely missing his head one inch.

"Kill him!" roared Tom, who supposed that his companion had been killed. Tom fired a shot at the captain which wounded his left cheek.

"Yah, dot vas vot I says sometimes mineself," thundered Jake, blazing away with his boat pistol. The bullet slightly wounded the captain's arm, and caused him to drop his pistol.

"Hold! don't commit murder!" cried Jack.

The captain stooped to regain his pistol, when Tom felled him with the butt of his own weapon.

In less time than we have taken to describe it, the ship was in the hands of the boy mutineers.

Jack paused and rested on the blade of his sword to regain breath. Captain Lawrence was unconscious from the blow he had received on his head, and before he could recover he was bound hard and fast.

"Well, what are we to do now?" Tom asked.

"Have we got all the others?"

"Just so goot as never vas before," Jake responded.

Jake's words were interpreted a few moments later by a report from Davis that all the forward part of the ship had surrendered without firing a shot.

"Where will you have 'em?" asked Davis.

"Bring them all to the forward gangway," Jack answered.

"We can't set 'em adrift before morning, and we'll have to keep 'em safe under hatches until that time."

The captain, who had begun to revive, was dragged to the deck and carried to the forward hatchway, where the mate and all others save Collins, who in the excitement was overlooked, were brought.

"Well, we've conquered; we're free now," cried Davis in high glee.

Captain Lawrence fixed his bloodshot eyes on the mutineers, whose features were illuminated by the ship's lanterns, and said:

"You shall all pay for this. Every one of you shall hang at the yardarm for it, my fine fellows."

"Ha, ha, ha! captain, you can boast now, but we'll look after you to see that ye don't harm us. We'll pay ye back kick for kick," cried some of the mutineers, and half a dozen of the sailors who had been mistreated by the brutal captain advanced toward him with the intention of carrying out the threat.

"Hold on, shipmates," cried Jack. "We can't allow anything of that kind. Remember that Captain Lawrence is now a prisoner. You would not strike a man when he is down."

The boys heard him, and everyone retired, thus saving Captain Lawrence a well-deserved chastisement.

"Never mind, my laddies," cried Lawrence, who was not the least intimidated by his captivity. "I will make it warm for you yet, you dogs! I will hang you to the mainmast."

"We haven't any doubt but that you would if an opportunity was afforded you, captain, but we will take care that you have no such a chance," said Jack.

"What have I done, you young dog, that you should cause this mutiny?"

"I don't think, Captain Lawrence, that you have forgotten the floggings you have given us when it was unjust. We all have scars and bruises to remind us of your tyranny."

"You are thieves, pirates——"

"No, we are not. We are human beings, and we do not intend to be punished any more by you. We are going to be free men."

"Let's put 'em under hatches, Jack, and then talk about what we are goin' to do."

The captives were taken under hatches and securely bound, two and two together, back to back.

"Now we'll leave a guard here with 'em," said Jack. "Davis can stay and see that none of them work off their cords or break their bonds and come up to annoy us."

Davis assented and the others went up on deck to arrange as to the course they would pursue.

The man at the wheel was their friend; the wind was light, and they decided to simply drift about until daylight.

"Well, Jack," said Tom, "what will we do now that we've got the ship and all in our hands?"

"Let's go somewhere and form a colony," said Jack.

"Why not go to Spain?"

"Py shemany, let's go to Yarmany und sell de sheep, und lif like von gread pig aristocrat," put in Jake.

"No, no, Jake, that would never do," put in Jack. "We cannot go to any civilized port in the world, for we would be sure to be recognized, seized, and all sent back to America. We couldn't sell it if we would, and I wouldn't sell it if I could, for then we would be thieves and pirates, but we can use it as a matter of necessity. Let us take it, go to some island after we have disposed of Captain Lawrence, and then we will have provisions on board to last us for a year, and in the meanwhile we can build our houses of it, and have the advantage of all the tools."

"It's a capital idea, boys," cried Tom. "It's the very thing, and we'll make a colony that may live in history."

"Oh, yah, I dinks so meinself," put in Jake.

"Now, how many have we all told?"

"Fifteen," answered Tom.

"Only fourteen," said another. "You mustn't count Luke Tyrol, for he hasn't joined us yet."

"But he will."

"I don't believe Luke will have anything to do with either side."

"He will be compelled to take sides now," answered Jack. "He must either go in the boat with Captain Lawrence and the others in the morning or accompany us."

"He will go with us," said Tom.

"That I doubt," put in another.

"We might find out by seeing him and asking him at once," said Jack.

"Well, I'll go and hunt him up," Davis responded, rising to his feet.

The night was clear and the stars shone brightly. There was little wind, and as the mutineers had not determined upon any course, no sail was set. The good ship Betsy Ann drifted idly on the sea, and the light winds barely fanned the heated cheeks of the mutineers.

All were young, if not boys. Their leader, as we have seen, was but a smooth-faced boy, and while they did not lack in courage and determination, they were deficient in caution and experience.

Even while they were sitting or standing in a group near the main hatchway, two dark forms were stealing their way along the deck.

Oh, Tom, Jack, why do not some of you cast a single backward glance, and see those creeping figures?

After Joe Watson had fallen under the fire in the attack, no further notice had been given him. He lay so still upon the deck that every one supposed he was dead. Had they made a close examination, they would have discovered that the bullet had only inflicted a wound upon the cheek, the blood from which stained the deck upon which he had fallen.

Joe Watson was not killed, and he was possessed of far more shrewdness than he was given credit for. Weak from loss of blood as he was, he noiselessly crawled back to the stern of the vessel, and so cautious were his movements that no one heard or saw him. He was gone but a short time, when he came crawling back, this time accompanied by Bill Collins, whom he had succeeded in rescuing.

The mutineers were still engaged in consultation as the two sailors quietly raised the hatches and disappeared below.

Now may the boy mutineers keep well on their guard. They heard a slight noise beneath, but it was so slight that they did not give it a moment's thought.

Davis had just risen from the bale of goods on which he was sitting with the avowed determination of hunting Luke Tyrol and learning to what conclusion he had arrived, when sud-

denly the hatches were thrown open and seven furious men, who but a moment before were prisoners, sprang up on deck.

"Oh, ho, my fine dogs, we'll see now who controls this ship!" thundered Captain Lawrence.

"Rescued!" cried Jack, starting up and cocking his revolver.

"Surrender or die!" thundered Lawrence.

"Never!"

A volley was fired by the recent captives, and one of the mutineers fell.

Jack saw that their only hope was the extermination of the enemy. Bloodshed was inevitable.

"Shoot 'em down, boys!" he cried, setting the example.

Two or three volleys were given and returned in quick succession. The officers, with Lawrence at their head, charged on the mutineers, emptying their pistols as they came.

Jack Errol felt a hot, stinging pain on his forehead, and staggered and fell.

CHAPTER IV.

LUKE AT LAST TAKES A PART.

"There, the ringleader is down!" yelled Captain Lawrence, dancing with delight. "On to the rascals—down with 'em! They shall swing for this!"

"Py sheemany, how vos dot?" yelled Jake, firing his boat pistol at the captain. The shot missed Captain Lawrence, but pierced the heart of Joe Watson, and he fell dead to the deck.

This caused a momentary lull in the contest, and Tom Jones seized Jack Errol's body and dragged it back out of reach of the avenging cutlass of his old enemy, Captain Lawrence.

Pistols had been emptied, and though at close quarters, yet under such exciting circumstances that they had done but little execution.

One had been slain on each side, and the two forces now stood confronting each other.

Jake had missed the captain, as we have seen, but he determined that he should not go altogether unpunished, and so he hurled his heavy pistol at Lawrence's head with such force that he knocked him senseless to the deck.

Everything now seemed favorable once more to the mutineers. They had partially recovered from their surprise, and greatly outnumbered the officers.

But Jack was thought to be killed, and this had thrown them into a momentary confusion, during which time their enemies hurled some iron bars at them and felled another of their number.

Tom, seeing that there was danger of losing the advantage they had gained, assumed command and cried:

"Load your pistols quick, my lads, or it will be all day for us. We'll swing for this if we fall into their hands."

They retreated toward the fore-castle in order to load their weapons.

His excited comrades made an effort to obey his command. But most of them were young, as we have seen, and the great exciting strain was against them. Jake, who had managed to recover his pistol after knocking the captain down with it, was so much excited that he rammed down the ball before he put in the powder. Others made blunders equally as fatal.

During the momentary lull in the attack Captain Lawrence recovered, and white with rage, he ordered his men to charge down upon the mutineers. Jack Errol had also partially recovered himself, and Tom Jones and the young sailor who had been left to guard Bill Collins, and from whom Bill had been rescued by Joe Watson, as we have seen, were gathered about him with three others. Jake, at the head of the others, was standing on the quarterdeck expecting the attack.

"Now, mine shipmates," said Jake, who had momentarily assumed command, "dis ere pusiness will bead ter tuyful 'cept we git caught. Dey vill hang us shust so high as nefer vas, und dar vos goin' to be trouble."

Jake proved to be no false prophet, for Captain Lawrence, seeing that the mutineers were divided in two groups, ordered a dash upon the group that was gathered about Jack Errol.

"Dere dey koom, py shemany Christmas! Shood 'em!" yelled Jake, at the same time leveling his enormous pistol, to set the example. But only a dull click followed, and of all the group there were but two or three weapons that were discharged.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lawrence, with the fury and delight of a fiend, as they rushed down upon Jack and his friends.

Tom saw the oncoming avalanche, and cried:

"Here they are, shipmates—repel boarders." He fired a pistol but missed.

A bullet inflicted a slight wound on his shoulder.

The captain and his myrmidons were on them with iron bars and clubbed weapons, and in less than five minutes they were beaten to the deck and made prisoners.

"Oh, you rascals!" roared the infuriated captain. "We have you now! We'll teach you how to mutiny! Every one of you shall swing for this!"

"Let us throw 'em overboard right away, captain."

"No, no—not right away. I'll see 'em dance—I'll enjoy their bein' tortured a while first. Oh, they shall have a happy time of it, I'll assure you. The thumb-screws, the red-hot pincers, and end up with walking the plank!"

Jake, with the other mutineers who had so far escaped, retreated to the after part of the ship, where they stood inactive and huddled together like so many frightened sheep.

"Py shemany, dey vas like von great big squall," said Jake.

"They brought us up all stan'in'," another sailor answered.

"What are we goin' to do, shipmates?" another asked.

"We can do nuthin' toward defendin' ourselves an' takin' the ship," answered one poor wretch, who was trembling like a leaf. "They are too many for us. All we can do is ask for mercy. Maybe if we surrender and promise to be faithful in the future Captain Lawrence will forgive us."

"Don't ye belief dot von bit," put in Jake, earnestly. "Ve vos zo goot as tead right now, eef dot capen got his hants on ye."

"Jake's right," said another. "We must conquer or die."

"But what kin we do, shipmate?" said the trembling, faltering Jack Tar.

"We kin die."

"Yah, dot vos all zo, mein frient, und ve kin make utter scamps tie, too, in dem meandimes."

With this Jake gave a significant look at his pistol, which had failed him. He proceeded to draw the load, and despite their danger, a broad smile came over his face at the discovery that he had put down the ball before the powder. Other pistols were found to be in no better condition, and they could not longer wonder at their recent ill luck.

In the meanwhile Captain Lawrence was giving full sway to his passions. He stood over the bound and helpless form of Jack Errol, and, after administering two or three cruel kicks, contented himself with abuse.

"You are the ringleader in this mutiny, my fine lad, and I intend making it particularly warm for you."

"Do your worst, Captain Lawrence. I am in your power, yet I can defy you."

"You can, can you? Well, I'll make you humble before I'm through with you, you young dog. I'll break your spirit before you become food for the sharks."

"What will we do with them first, captain?" asked the mate.

"Lash 'em to the mainmast and give each a dozen blows

with a rope on the bare back," was the cruel answer. Some of the prisoners set up a howl of dread at this, but Tom and Jack were both silent, determined to stoically endure any punishment the brutal captain saw fit to heap upon them.

They had mutinied against the ship, and knew that according to marine law their lives were forfeited. Captain Lawrence was cruel and unsparing, and no mercy need be expected of him.

"Yes, sir, your punishment shall be as heavy as I can make it," the captain continued to Jack Errol, whom he had dragged a little apart from the others. "You have proved yourself an outlaw—a mutineer."

"I had cause to mutiny."

"What cause?"

"Your cruel tyranny——"

"You lie! You shall die for the act."

"It is only death, anyhow, Captain Lawrence," the youth bravely returned. "I did my best to please you, but you were cruel to me when I was so sick I scarce could stand; you frequently made me go aloft and reef a foretop gallant. You would have killed me, anyway, before this voyage was over. The sooner you kill me the better. I believe it was your intention to kill me when we started on this voyage."

"Ha, ha, ha, ha! If it's any consolation to know it, you young lubber, that was my intention. I get five thousand dollars if you never return from this voyage! Fool! don't you see how you have played into my hands? Ha, ha, ha!"

There was one man who heard this cruel admission who had taken no part in the mutiny. It was the quiet, patient, sober sailor, Luke Tyrrol. Luke had never been known to disobey an order, and was respected and esteemed for his courage and excellent seamanship. What Luke heard almost made his blood boil.

"Captain Lawrence," said Luke Tyrrol, laying his hand on the arm of the captain, "what do you intend doing with the mutineer prisoners?"

"Hang every one of them!" was the answer.

"Captain, is it not bad policy to kill 'em when we're in mid-ocean and short o' hands?"

"Who's captain here, I'd like to know? Is it you or I?"

"It's you, capen, but these men are good sailors, and we need shipmates."

"Were you in the mutiny?"

"No, sir. I've obeyed every order ye ever give me, capen."

"And you'll obey every one I give. You shall help swing 'em off for this, see if you don't. Refuse to help hang the rascals and you will be guilty of mutiny."

Luke turned away. His brave, manly heart could endure no more.

At this moment a volley of shots at the stern startled everybody, and three of Captain Lawrence's men, who had gone in that direction in search of Jake and his companions, came running back, one with a shattered arm, and the other with a pistol ball in his jaw.

Captain Lawrence bounded from the deck with a yell of rage and astonishment. So intent had been his satisfaction and rage in the capture of Jack Errol and the mutineers found with him, that the others had been almost forgotten.

"What's the matter, dogs?" he yelled, as they came running toward him.

"The mutineers are at the stern, capen, fortified behind bales of goods," answered the mate.

"Tie these fellows, batten them down under the hatches so they can't get away, and we'll have the others in a moment," roared the captain.

The sailors set about securing their shipmates, and the cords were drawn so tightly as to bring forth an occasional groan.

"Bear it easy, lads—bear it easy," said the captain. "It will not be a great while until you will be beyond trouble and pain. You cowardly dogs, you have only a taste of what's to come."

The poor fellows were hastily bound and thrown like so many bales of goods into the dark hold.

Jack Errol was slightly stunned by his fall. Another of his comrades dropped upon him, and he managed to roll away a short distance so as to be out of the range of falling bodies.

All was dark, and only the groans of his wretched companions broke the awful silence.

"Tom—Tom!" he faintly whispered.

"Ay, ay, shipmate!" came back the answer.

"Were you hurt by the fall?"

"Not much. It makes no difference, though, we're done for anyway."

"Perhaps not. Don't despair."

"I'll not, shipmate. I'm goin' to die game."

Several of the others gave utterance to groans and cries at this.

"Come, shipmates, be men!" cried Jack Errol. "Don't let the captain and his murderers hear you make any complaint. Don't let them hear you groan."

At this moment a rapid firing above could be distinctly heard. There was a rush of footsteps, angry voices, quick reports, and all the evidences of a fight.

Though Jack Errol had but little hopes of Jake and his companions being able to beat off the captain and his forces, he found those hopes steadily growing stronger as the sounds of conflict above increased.

At last the hatchway was partially raised, and someone came quickly yet softly down.

"Jack, Jack, Tom, Tom, where are you?" a familiar voice asked.

"Luke—Luke Tyrrol," cried both young sailors, "is it you?"

"Yes, it is."

"What are you doing here?"

"Come to set you free, shipmates."

"What, Luke, is it possible that you have become one of us?" cried Jack.

"I am now a mutineer, and we will make it win yet."

Luke, in the meanwhile, had lighted a small lantern, and crept toward them. His strong, nimble fingers quickly released them.

"How goes the fight above?" Jack asked, rubbing his wrists to once more get his blood in circulation.

"Very well. Jake and the others have made a breastwork aft of the bales of goods, and beat off Captain Lawrence and his gang twice. Now just wait here, till I find some clubs, barrel staves, and weppins, to fight with, and we'll soon have this over with."

Every man had been liberated, and with hearts beating high with anxiety, they sat grouped together, waiting the return of the late recruit to the mutiny.

CHAPTER V.

THE MUTINY A SUCCESS.

The moments seemed ages to the anxious waiting sailors, as they sat in the dark hold listening to the sharp reports above.

After several minutes, they saw a faint glimmering light in the distance, and a few moments later Luke came to them with rough, heavy barrel staves and clubs, that would form excellent weapons.

"There are an abundance of stones down in the hold," he

said. "These will be of great service to us. Let us take half a dozen each, and they will be a greater help than pistols."

"Yes, for they never miss fire."

After a momentary lull in the attack above there came another rush of feet and another volley of shots, followed by scampering of feet in almost every direction.

"They've repulsed 'em agin," said Luke. "Come, lads, let's hurry up and end this."

They followed him down into the hold, where they found the stone ballast, affording them an abundance of weapons.

Half a dozen stones of the most convenient weight for hurling were selected by each, and they made ready to venture above.

This had consumed some time, and in the meanwhile there had come another lull in the fight above.

"Follow me, shipmates, and have a care," said Jack Errol, when they reached the foot of the companion ladder. "We'll spring out upon 'em when they are not suspecting any danger."

"Hold, shipmate," said Luke, as Jack began ascending the companion ladder.

"What now, Luke?"

"Wait a moment until they have again begun the attack, then they will be between two fires, and we will surprise them by comin' upon their rear."

Jack was possessed of enough military ability to discern the advantage of this advice, and called a momentary halt.

Like angry wolves the young sailors waited, ready at the right moment to rush upon their enemies.

At last the voice of Captain Lawrence could be heard above, commanding his followers to make one more dash upon the mutineers.

"Shipmates, we've got to kill them, or they'll kill us!" cried the captain. "Now it's victory or death. What are you going to do? Be set adrift to starve or hang the dogs?"

"Hang 'em!" went up a loud shout, and then the stentorian voice of the hated captain could be heard, saying:

"Come on, messmates, we'll sweep 'em from existence."

There was a rush of feet above, and a moment after two volleys near the stern of the vessel.

"Now is our time!" cried Jack.

Luke Tyrrol, who was at his side and who was, perhaps, the strongest of any of them, hauled back the hatch door, and they sprang up the ladder to the deck.

By one or two swinging lanterns the deck of the vessel was partially illuminated. To the stern could be seen half a dozen dark forms evidently engaged in attempting to carry a small fortification of bales and boxes.

They were almost to the barricade, and firing as rapidly as they could at the sailors behind it. As yet no one had been seriously hurt, but now as one man attempts to scale the works some one behind them shoots him dead, and he falls back upon the deck.

Captain Lawrence and his party have emptied their pistols, another of their number has been slain, and they turn to retreat, their hopes almost crushed and courage nearly gone.

But here a new struggle awaits them. A new yell bursts on their ears, and they see their late captives coming toward them.

"Let 'em have it!" cried Jack, and the next moment a volley of pelting stones goes whizzing at the captain and his men.

"Death and fury!" roars the captain once more, realizing that the tables have again been turned upon himself. "Down with them. Kill the pirates. Fire on them, why don't you fire?"

"Every weapon is empty, captain," answered the mate.

Another volley of pelting stones and down went the mate and another of the crew.

Wild yells now rise upon the air from the rear. Jake and his companions have been liberated, and are coming to join in the pitched battle, and are pouring over their works upon the captain and his few followers.

Another volley of stones and they closed in on all sides.

Even the pilot, who had remained neutral, seeing that Luke had taken sides with the boy mutineers, lashed down the wheel and hastened to lend what assistance he could.

In a few moments Captain Lawrence and his followers are beaten to the deck and made prisoners. The captain was felled by a blow from a barrel stave, and did not regain his consciousness until he had been tied hard and fast.

"Now, shipmates," said Jack Errol, when they had all been well secured, "we must allow no chance for them to escape this time. Instead of putting them down under hatches, as we did before, we will leave them on deck with four to guard them."

"Py sheemany, dot vos dalkkin' like von goot gommon sense," returned Jake, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

"There will be no chance for them to get away this time," put in Luke Tyrrol.

Captain Lawrence had fully recovered. He heard the voice of the sailor who had been always regarded as faithful, and turning his head so as to see him from where he lay, the captive said:

"Luke, Luke, are you, too, against me?"

"I am, capen."

"I thought you said you would have nothing to do with this mutiny."

"I had taken no part in it then, nor would I, capen, had I not heard you threaten to kill 'em, to torture 'em, and boast to Jack that you would get five thousand dollars for puttin' him out o' the way."

Jack, who was near enough to hear the answer of his brave shipmate, now remembered the strange remark of the captain.

"Captain Lawrence," he said, "our fortunes have changed since we had our last conversation. Will you tell me who it was that offered you five thousand dollars to kill me during this voyage?"

The prisoner glared at him for a moment with more than savage ferocity, and then cried:

"Fool, do you think I will tell you?"

"I can't see why you should not. It will no longer pay you to keep the secret."

"You can kill me, hang me, roast me alive, kill me by inches or boil me, but I swear I will not tell you."

"Very well, captain. If that is your decision I shall ask you no more questions."

Ned came up and told Jack there were three dead bodies on the deck. One was one of their own men, and the other two had belonged to the captain's forces. There was but one thing to do, and that was to sew the three lifeless bodies in canvas with weights to sink them, and throw them into the sea.

The burial over, the wounded were looked after as best they could, and they were made tolerably comfortable.

The time occupied in seizing the ship had been much shorter than our friends supposed, for those moments of suspense seemed like ages to them. Daylight dawned at last, and they were masters of the ship.

The five prisoners were given their breakfast. All were gloomy and sullen. Captain Lawrence ate but very little, and asked for a drink of brandy.

Jack, who had been careful to keep all the liquors locked up from the mutineers, went and brought him a glass of brandy.

As the captain turned it off, he raised his baleful eyes to the young mutineer, and said:

"Jack, I will pay you back for all this."

"I have no doubt of it, captain, should the opportunity ever

be afforded you. But I shall take care to keep myself out of your clutches."

The captain glared at him, gritted his teeth in rage, and in a voice that was hoarse with passion hissed:

"You will—you will. I'll kill you, yes, I'll kill you yet, if I have to hunt you to the ends of the earth. You cannot go so far, nor hide yourself so securely that I will not find you. Yes, yes, I will travel all over the earth, and I will find you and kill you."

Jack knew that it was no use to parley longer with the captain. He ordered the longboat to be lowered, and three kegs of water and one of brandy, two cases of sea-biscuit, and an abundance of salt pork to last the five for two weeks to be put into it.

Luke had cast the log, taken an observation, and estimated that in eight or ten days the prisoners could easily reach some of the inhabited islands to the east.

Breakfast was at last over. A compass, some sails, and everything except arms that the captain and his men might want were placed in their boat.

"Now all is ready," said Jack to the prisoners. "Come one at a time, and your bonds will be untied and you lowered to the boat."

The mate came first, next the cook, and then the two others, and last of all the captain.

As the skipper was lowered into the boat, he turned his eyes up to the bulwark, over which Jack was leaning, and shaking his fist at him, said:

"You will rue this work, lad; as I live, you will yet rue it," and took his seat in the stern.

His four companions took up the oars, and soon the long boat with the officers of the *Betsy Ann* were drifting farther and farther away from the ship, now occupied only by the mutineers. Before he was out of sight, Captain Lawrence turned again and shook his fist at the vessel, and uttered some terrible threat, which was lost on the winds.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ISLAND—A REPULSE.

"That's the last we'll ever see of them," said the young sailor called Ned, watching the distant boat, which was now only a speck upon the waters.

"We mustn't be too sure about that," answered Luke Tyrrol, who was at his side.

The speck grew smaller and smaller, until it at last entirely disappeared.

Then the boy mutineers turned their eyes from it, and gazed upon each other. Perhaps it was the first time they had ever realized their situation. What were they to do? Where were they to go?

They dared enter no civilized port, for it would be arrest, imprisonment, and death for mutiny and piracy.

"The first thing to do, shipmates, is to select a captain," said Luke Tyrrol. "Let us elect a captain and two lieutenants, those whom we will obey through life or death. Our safety depends upon them, so let us make good selections."

"His head's level."

"Luke's right."

"Let us select a capen."

Consequently the entire crew gathered about the mainmast, and Jack called the meeting to order, making a short address to them, informing them of their dangerous position, and the necessity of some general action, and advised the selection of a captain. Luke, he thought, would make the best one among them for captain.

But Luke knew he wouldn't. They agreed to select their officers by ballot.

Jack's election as captain of the good ship *Betsy Ann* was

unanimous. Tom was next chosen as first and Luke as second lieutenant.

The course of the ship was now changed to S.S.W., and the most trusty man placed at the wheel and a good lookout at the masthead, while the three new officers went to the captain's cabin to consult.

"Well, what will we do now that we have made the mutiny a success?" asked Tom.

"My plan is to hold our course S.S.W. until we come to that chain of islands which can't be more than three or four days' sail from here."

"Are they inhabited?" asked Tom.

"Some are, and some are not."

"How are the natives, peaceable or warlike?"

"Well," answered Luke, who had been there, "it is all owing to just in what mood you find 'em. Some of the islanders would receive us well, and at some islands we'd find 'em ready to fight us."

"Well, we will have to chance it," said Jack. "We can sail about among these South Sea islands until we find a home suitable for us, and then colonize."

After awhile the discussion ended, and the three officers went on deck.

All the crew save two, the most severely wounded, were fit for duty. These were put in their hammocks and cared for as well as could be done under the circumstances.

The remainder of the crew Jack and his lieutenants divided into watches, and the ship held to her course S.S.W.

The day passed, and at night the wind rose. By midnight it was blowing a perfect hurricane. Jack's experience in seamanship was not as great as many others on board, yet he knew enough to have all sails reefed and the ship placed in the best condition possible to weather the storm.

He could not but think of Captain Lawrence and his companions in their open boat exposed to the storm, and wondered if they would be able to weather it.

But his duties and their own danger engrossed most of his time and attention. The waves seemed rolling mountains high, and down in the trough of the sea the ship labored at one moment, to be the next tossed upon the very top of some foam-crested wave. But the boy mutineers managed their craft well, and with the break of day the storm ceased.

"Where are we now?" Jack asked of Luke.

"I don't know, capen, but as soon as we can get the sun we'll make an observation."

The clouds rolled away before the sun was many hours high, and the sea became almost smooth. The breeze was gentle, and the vessel was gliding slowly through the waters.

Jack and Luke had just gone below to get their instruments for making an observation, when the lookout at the masthead cried:

"Land ho!"

"D'ye hear that?" said Luke.

In a moment both were on the deck, and Jack, seizing a speaking trumpet, bawled out:

"Where away?"

"Three points on our lee bow."

Every sailor was now on deck, and all straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of the land. Hearts were beating wildly, partially with joy and partially with dread.

They were coming to a new land, perhaps to an unexplored island that was to be their home for life. Although the novelty of the thing produced a little excitement, there was dread mingled with their pleasure.

"Masthead there!" called Jack.

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Can you make out the land?"

"Not exactly, but I believe it's an island. It is mountainous and seems covered with forests."

"By shemany, dot vos yust zo goot as could be," said Jake, who had been quiet all morning, "ve raise grapes und hops, und make me some of dot vine und bully lager peer."

Everyone smiled at Jake's consolation. The wind was fair, and Jack had the vessel headed directly for the island.

In less than half an hour they were so near as to be able to see it from the deck. In the background, or central part, could be seen mountain peaks, while lower foothills and peaks covered with verdure to their very summits seemed to come almost to the water's edge.

Nearer and nearer they approached until they could easily make out the island. It was many miles in extent with beautiful valleys, lofty mountains, and deep rivers.

"I believe there is an excellent bay, with a river emptying into it," said Jack. "We can enter there without trouble."

"Yes, but is it inhabited?" asked Tom.

"If it is, it is by savages."

They were not a mile from the island, and not a human being was to be seen. The vessel under the excellent management of Luke, who took the wheel, glided into the bay, while Jack, Tom, Jake and four others made arrangements to go ashore.

In the hold of the ship were forty muskets, about fifty pistols, two dozen cutlasses, and several kegs of powder and ammunition.

Each of the exploring party took a gun, a brace of pistols and a cutlass, and lowering a boat as the ship cast anchor, descended into it and pulled for the shore.

There was a stretch of sandy beach along the shore about one hundred paces in width, and back of it a dense forest.

Tom and Jack were in the bow of the boat, both eagerly straining their eyes shoreward.

"It don't look as if a human being had ever set foot on this shore," said Jack.

The words were scarce uttered before half a hundred dark, wild-looking creatures, dressed in the most fantastic savage style, suddenly burst from the timber and rushed down upon them with yells that seemed to make the island tremble.

They were not five cables' length from shore, and the oarsmen paused appalled.

"Oh, Heaven save us, look!" cried Tom.

The air was almost darkened with arrows and stones. The missiles fell thick about them, one or two of the arrows actually striking the boat.

"Let us fire and scare them!" said Jack, and taking up their muskets they blazed away; but the sounds of fire-arms did not deter them. The savages rushed down almost to the water's edge and let fly another shower of missiles. Their guns were all emptied in vain.

"Back to the ship!" cried Jack, and a moment later they were rowing for life.

But a cry of alarm from Tom caused Jack to look off to the larboard, and he discovered three large canoes, manned and propelled each by a dozen strong natives, who were trying to cut them off.

"Bend to your oars, my lads!" cried Jack. "We have now begun a race for life."

CHAPTER VII.

SEEKING A HOME.

The sailors needed no second command. They saw the three canoes loaded with dark, murderous-looking savages coming

after them at a rate of speed which threatened to soon over-haul them.

The oarsmen bent to their oars, and the boat seemed to almost leap out of the water.

"Tom," said Jack, "let us load and fire as fast as we can."

"Mine Gott, dot vas goot," cried Jake, who sat in the stern holding the rudder. "Dey vill make van leetle sausages meat out of mineself!"

Tom and Jack loaded their guns, and aiming at the foremost canoe, both pulled trigger. Two deafening reports and two puffs of smoke, then a commotion in the canoe, told that someone was hurt.

It caused a momentary check, and the fugitive boat in the meanwhile increased the distance between them and their pursuers. But the savages along the shore were becoming quite annoying, for they were not out of range of their bows and slings.

"Oh, mine Gott, mine Gott, I vos stung mit von gread pig pumble bee!" yelled Jake. Jack looked at the poor fellow and saw an arrow sticking in the fleshy part of his arm.

"You are wounded, Jake!" cried our hero, running to his side. "Let me pull it out," and he took hold of the shaft.

"No, no, mine Gott, capen. Yust leef him alone, und den he von't bleed doo much all dem dimes, you vos know."

"Can you steer the boat wounded as you are, Jake?" Jack asked.

"Oh, yah, mine capdain, yust so goot as pefore I did it."

"Come, captain, let us teach those fellows on shore a lesson!" cried Tom, and each of the boy mutineers took up a musket and poured a volley into the howling wretches along the shore. The effect was to send them scampering away a few rods, but a moment later they returned again. Arrows and heavy stones again came hissing and humming about their ears, but fortunately, as if by some miracle, no one was hit. The distance had become so great that none save the strongest and most expert could reach them with their bows and slings.

One fellow particularly, who seemed a perfect giant in size, had a sling from which he hurled heavy stones with dangerous precision. He was about to send a large one when Jack fired at him. The sling dropped from his hand, the stone rolling into the water, and he staggered and would have fallen but for two or three of his companions who sprang forward and caught him in their arms.

Then the whole mass of black-skinned wretches got back up the beach and lay down upon the sand.

The oarsmen had lost no time, and it was well for them they hadn't, for the canoes, loaded with angry, howling black monsters, were again paddling toward them.

Their friends on board the Betsy Ann had been watching them with no little anxiety. On the deck of the ship was a pair of small brass four-pounders, and Luke Tyrrol had one of these dragged forward, loaded, shotted and aimed it himself at one of the advancing boats.

The match was applied, and the prow of the advancing canoe knocked in.

"We are saved," said Jack.

"Yah, dot vas goot," said Jake, whose arm was becoming more painful every moment, "but, py sheemany, dot vos von mighty sore arm I hafe."

"Pull away, lads, here we are alongside."

"All right," cried Luke, leaning over the vessel's side. "They are now going back."

Ropes were lowered and made fast to the rings in the bow and stern of the boat, and it, with its crew, soon hoisted to the davits.

"Well," said Luke, as soon as all were safely on board, "do you think, capen, that we can effect a landing?"

"No; up anchor and let us get away from here before night," Jack answered. "We must be beyond reach of their canoes before it's dark, or we'll have 'em all around us."

The captain was warned, and the anchor hoisted, then the Betsy Ann sailed out of the harbor.

The point of land which put out some distance into the sea was covered with natives, whose angry cries reached the ears of the boy mutineers long after they were out to sea.

At last they faded from view, and when night again came over the scene there was no sign of land anywhere. It was a bright, clear night, there was little wind, and the watch was set and all made snug.

Morning came without any adventure or incident worthy of note.

Jack and his two lieutenants again repaired to the cabin to consult the chart.

"We must find a home," said the youthful mutineer captain. "There must be islands in these waters that are either uninhabited or inhabited by peaceful natives."

"There are," Luke answered. "I don't think there can be more than two-thirds of the islands on this chart."

"Why is it so imperfect?"

"Captain Lawrence had no intention of making the voyage that we are, and cared but very little about this part of the chart."

"Well," said Jack, "we will have to keep touching at islands until we find a place that is suitable."

"Yes," returned Tom, "but we will be compelled to use some care or we will be in a hornet's nest again, before we know it."

They went again upon deck and scanned the horizon closely with their glasses, but no land was in sight.

"By sheemany Christmas, dot vos von zore arm vot I haf," said Jake, who was carrying his arm in a sling.

"You have taken the arrow out at last, Jake," the boy captain said.

"Oh, yah, by sheemany, dot vas so anyhow—but it vas hurt-in' ven I done him."

"Oh, Jake, you will soon be well. You must pay no attention to a little scratch like that."

"Oh, py sheemany, you call dot von leedle scratch, do you? Vell, eef dot vas von leedle scratch, den von pig von would dake all mine head off, py sheemany it would."

The day passed without any incident worthy of mention.

When night came Jack set the watch and, retiring to his bunk, was soon asleep. In his dreams he was once more back to his happy childhood. His mother was again alive, and that father who was but dimly remembered but so fondly loved was with him again. They wandered in new, strange lands where the citrons bloomed, palms waved, and the sweetest songs of birds seemed to fill the air.

But in dreams as in real life there came dark, trying hours. Clouds seemed to suddenly rise and obscure the golden sunlight. All grew dark and he trembled. There seemed to come crashing thunders all about him; he tried to grasp his father's hand, but he was gone.

He awoke and found himself in utter darkness. There was a strange roaring sound in his ears, and someone was banging away at his door.

"Jack, Jack, Jack! Get up—tumble up!" shouted the well-known voice of Tom. In the excitement Tom had forgotten that Jack was captain.

"What is it, Tom?" the lad asked, opening the door.

"We are on breakers."

"What? Can it be so?"

He hurried up to the deck, only half dressed.

The sky which in the fore part of the night had been so clear, was now overcast with thick black clouds, and the most intense darkness prevailed.

"Oh, py gootness, ve vos lost," groaned Jake.

At first the boy mutineer could see nothing, but a wild roaring sound on the starboard bow reached his ear. The ship had struck and her beam ends were considerably higher than her stern.

"How did it happen?" he asked.

Luke Tyrrol said that the man at the wheel and lookout must have been asleep, for they did not know that they were near land until they had ran aground.

The ship's lanterns were swung on the larboard and on the bowsprit, with powerful reflectors to send the light ahead, but nothing but the black water could be seen.

"All that can be done is to wait until morning," said Jack.

The little ripple of excitement and fear which ran over the ship's crew at first passed away in a few moments, and the boy mutineers waited with great patience the approach of dawn. It came at last, and they found their vessel in shoal water, while a few hundred feet on their starboard was a long reef of rocks, against which the waves were beating.

"Well," said Jack to Luke, after that excellent seaman had taken in the entire situation, "what do you think of it?"

"It is not so bad as it might be."

"Do you think we can get her off?"

"Yes. As soon as the tide is in she will float."

"What kind of land is this?"

"It's a desert island—or at least, it so appears. But I think we had as well explore it."

"After breakfast I will go ashore with half a dozen, and we will see what sort of a home it will make," said Jack. "You had better remain on board and get the Betsy Ann afloat when the tide comes in."

As soon as breakfast was over Jack had a boat lowered, and with six young sailors put in to shore. They found a long stretch of sand before them, and one of the sailors remarked that it did not look as if it would make a very good home.

At last they came to a few palms, from which, as they approached, they saw a dozen large vultures fly.

This was the first signs of life, but when they reached the trees they discovered four grinning skeletons lying on the ground within the shade.

Jack and his companions came to a halt completely horrified.

CHAPTER VIII.

CAPTAIN LAWRENCE TURNS UP AGAIN.

Tom Jones and Luke stood in the forecastle and watched their friends land upon the sandy beach and start off toward those barren-looking hills, where only a few palm trees marked any signs of vegetable life.

"The prospect is not very good," said Tom.

"No," Luke answered. "I don't think anyone could live on this island."

"Yet there may be savages here fully as ferocious as we discovered upon the other. It would be a good idea to load the two swivels."

"We can, but there doesn't seem to be very much use."

But Tom insisted that the two swivel guns be dragged from their position on the main deck to the forecastle, so that if need be, they might be able to sweep the shore with them.

This proved very unfortunate for them in the end, as we shall see, but they did not dream that any other attack could be made on them than by savages from the shore, so the guns were loaded and placed in the forecastle to fire in that direction and no other.

They would have been useless in defending them from an attack in the stern.

This work done, all the sailors crowded into the forecabin and watched their comrades on shore.

"I don't think they will find anything here for their pains," said Tom.

"It would be a poor place to live," put in another sailor.

"Py shemany, von would tie mit dem vater some o' dese dimes," put in Jake.

"Jake is right," said Luke. "If there is any water on the island, it must be of an inferior quality."

He had his glass leveled on the group of trees, beneath which his horrified companions stood.

It seemed rather strange that they would walk around them in the manner they did, as though there was some loathsome object in that grove to be avoided. Having passed around the trees, they continued on toward the hills and sand dunes in the central part of the island. The sun beat down upon the scene, and it seemed as if the young sailors would suffocate.

There was not a breath of wind to stir the faintest ripple on the bosom of the deep.

"The tide must be comin' in," said Tom.

Luke threw a chip of wood overboard and said:

"Yes, it is—we shall soon be afloat."

"How long, do you think?"

"An hour at the farthest."

"But we von'd go away und leef dem, frient, mit te island like our Ropinson Crusoe," put in Jake.

"Oh, no, Jake, we are not going to desert our friends," said Tom. "We will just drift back from shore a mile, and drop anchor."

"Oh, yah, dot was goot—me likes dot mineself zome uv dese dimes."

So intently were they engaged in watching the incoming tide and marking certain landmarks that were fast disappearing that they did not notice the boat which had pulled around a point of rocks, and was bearing down upon them.

The occupants of the boat were not ruthless savages, but five determined men. They had from behind a headland been watching the ship since early dawn, they had noticed seven men leave her deck for the island, and knew that there were but six left. The odds were not so great, and if a surprise could be effected everything was in their favor.

This boat contained Captain Lawrence and his men who had been set adrift. They had been blown upon this island on the night of the storm, and had been hovering about it ever since. Their danger and suffering had been almost beyond description, and their joy at discovering the Betsy Ann aground was unspeakable.

"Ah, the fools—well have they played in my hands!" hissed Captain Lawrence, through his teeth. "Give way, lads, we'll soon be in possession of the ship."

They were coming right up at the vessel's stern, and kept so well in the wake as to be invisible to those in the forecabin.

"Lay low, lads, bend to your oars and we'll drift along under the mizzen chains, where we'll find a hand hold to go on deck."

Swiftly and silently as some dark shadow swept by a fierce gale over the sky came the boat under the keel of the vessel. The tide was coming in very rapidly, and it was evident that the stranded vessel would soon be afloat. Whatever the captain did to recover the ship he knew must be done quickly, for once it was afloat the attention of the mutineers would be directed toward them.

They sprang into the chains, their only weapons being clubs they had picked up from the shore, and Captain Lawrence taking the lead quickly climbed to the deck.

Jake had walked aft and was returning to the forecabin, for

the water had now grown almost deep enough for the vessel to float, when Captain Lawrence sprang upon him and at one blow felled him senseless to the deck.

"Come, quick, no time to lose," the captain whispered to his companions, and with their sticks in their hands they charged down upon the boy mutineers huddled together in the forecabin.

"Look, look, Captain Lawrence!" cried Tom, catching a glimpse of his captain at this moment.

A yell went up from the mutineers, who were almost powerless to resist the boarders. But two of the mutineers had pistols, and only one of these had the presence of mind to use his weapon. He fired but one shot, and missed, when his pistol was knocked from his hand.

"Down with the dogs," roared the captain. "Ha, ha, ha! I'll show you who commands this ship."

It was but the work of a moment. All the mutineers were beaten down upon the deck, and made captives; true, no bones were broken, but there were some painful bruises, and before it was hardly known, all were prisoners.

"Ha, ha, ha, fools, ha, ha, ha! Think to get ahead of me, do you? Oh, ha, ha, now I'll see that you make food for the sharks."

"We have no doubt of that, capen," returned Luke Tyrrol, sullenly, "but we are not the only mutineers. You have seven others all armed."

"Oh, ho! you are there, too, my fine fellow," cried the captain, striking the helpless prisoner a blow upon the face with his open hand. "Luke, the honest, brave Luke has turned out a mutineer. Very well, I'll hear the sharks crunch your bones."

"Our friends will return and rescue us."

"They will, will they? Well, we'll see about that! I thank you very much, my fine fellow, for calling my attention to them. I will now set about seeing that we take in the last one of them. Forecabin, ahoy, there!"

"Ay, ay," answered one of his men, who had been left there as a lookout.

"Will she float?"

"She does."

"Come, then, let's make all these prisoners hard and fast. There shall be no escaping this time, and we'll push out a little way and drop our anchor."

The prisoners were as helpless as babes, and the cruel captain and his men, as soon as the ship floated clear of the bar, set the fore and aft sail aback, and then Captain Lawrence, taking the wheel, she drifted out seaward into deeper water.

"There is no danger of stranding here," said the captain, when they had drifted fully a mile to windward. "Cast anchor and we will wait for the others."

"Wouldn't it be better, captain," suggested the mate, "to put to sea without them?"

"No; they shall not go unpunished," he answered. "Do you suppose I will let the young hound, Jack Errol, go free? Never!"

Then he had the prisoners carried below, bound and gagged, so they could make no noise, and he and his men began waiting for the return of the boy mutineers.

It would not excite any suspicion that the ship was a mile further from the shore, for the boys would know she had gone out to be in deep water when the tide went out. Captain Lawrence knew that that was what they had expected.

Like savage wolves they waited and waited for the victims to come within their reach.

In the meanwhile Jack Errol and his six companions had strolled across the hills of sand and came to where a forest of palms seemed to grow up out of the stony earth.

Here they made a wonderful discovery. It was a large tem-

ple standing on eight vast stone pillars, with the remnants of what had once been a roof over it.

The whole structure was crumbling into ruins, and there was no telling at what date it had been erected. There were evidences of people having been there recently, and they saw near the temple a grinning skull upon a stone.

"What is it, capen?" asked one of the sailors, who had a superstitious dread of the temple.

"It's doubtless a place where some of the savages came to sacrifice victims," Jack answered. He had read of Crusoe's Island, and this seemed very much like it.

"If the savages are on this island, let's go back to the ship," said the trembling sailor.

"I don't think there are any savages here. This may only be an island which they visit. Let us go a little farther and explore it."

Though some of the young sailors objected, they would not utterly refuse. They looked carefully to their guns, and then climbed the hills north of the ruins they had discovered. But nothing was to be seen but small groves of trees and sand for five or six miles, and beyond this the blue sea.

"It's uninhabited," said Jack. "Let us go back."

On their return they found a pool of brackish water. It was so strongly alkalied that they could not drink it, and being weary and thirsty, hurried to the ship.

"Hello, capen, she's moved out—she's off ground," said one of the sailors, who was in advance.

"That's good news," returned Jack. "We are saved from starvation on this desert island."

There lay the ship peacefully riding at anchor a mile from shore. Their own boat was where it had been moored, but the tide had placed a broad sheet of water between them and it.

One of the sailors waded in and brought it nearer, so they could all embark.

"I long to get aboard," said Jack, taking his place in the stern of the boat, while his men took their places at the oars.

Their arms were carelessly laid in the bottom.

"Yes, capen, I don't want to see any more o' that island."

"Neither do I," the youthful captain answered, "for if ever there was an island of desolation it is one. I would rather be among those fighting savages than to die here of starvation and thirst."

The sun was so hot that the men were almost exhausted. There was but very little breeze, and the sailors declared they believed they would melt, nevertheless they bent to their oars, and the boat containing the unsuspecting boys glided up under the hull of the vessel, on the deck of which their enemies were lying in wait, like serpents to strike the moment their heads appeared above the gunwale.

CHAPTER IX.

WALKING THE PLANK.

"They're here, capen!"

"Hist, lay low—don't let them see you," answered Captain Lawrence.

"Ahoy, there, throw us a rope!"

It was the voice of Jack Errol that called.

"Ahoy, I say! Are you all asleep? Throw us a line!"

Captain Lawrence knew that something must be done. If the line was not tossed to them, the boy mutineers would have their suspicions aroused, and yet not one of them dared show his head, lest they should be recognized. The captain seized

a line, and, without allowing himself to be seen, he threw it overboard to those in the boat below.

"They are acting rather strange," said Jack.

He really feared that his friends had got to the liquors, and were all in a state of beastly intoxication. The idea that the captain was within five hundred miles of them, never for a moment entered his head. He was only too anxious to get on board the vessel, and began climbing up the rope, hand over hand, toward the deck above.

With a single rope but one could climb at a time. He glanced over the deck, but saw no one, and then he sprang over the bulwark. The moment his feet touched the deck, he was seized by two strong men, who had heretofore remained concealed. The boy made a manly effort to defend himself and give a warning shout to the others, but a hand was placed over his mouth and his cries smothered.

He continued to fight with all his strength until a blow stretched him senseless upon the deck.

"The worst is over," whispered the captain.

A moment later a second mutineer sprang over the deck, to be knocked down with a marline spike.

"What's the matter up there?" called out one of his companions from below. "Did ye fall?"

"No," answered Captain Lawrence, in a disguised voice.

The third man was made a captive the moment he appeared, then the fourth.

There was no longer any need of concealment, so Captain Lawrence and his men started up over the gunwale, each leveling a cocked musket at the three remaining in the boat, and ordering them to leave all weapons behind to come on deck one at a time. They could do no better than obey.

In less than ten minutes after the boat containing the boy mutineers had reached the ship's side, they were every one prisoners.

"Oh, ho! I have you all now, my fine fellows. Ha, ha, ha!" cried Captain Lawrence, as he danced about the deck near where the captured Jack Errol lay. "I'll make sure work of you this time. Ah, ha, ha, ha, you young brute."

"I don't doubt but that you will, Captain Lawrence," said the youth, in a calm, firm voice. "I shall have nothing to regret, however, that I made an effort to save my life."

"You won't, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Do you know what I am going to do with you?"

"Kill me, I suppose."

"But the manner?"

"No."

"Well, not more than five leagues from here is an island called Sharks' Island. There is a large bay in the island called Sharks' Bay because it is constantly filled with sharks. Now, I intend to sail for those waters, and when we are anchored in them two of you shall be made walk the plank every day in the presence of the others. Ha, ha, ha! won't the sharks have a fine meal off you!"

Orders were at once given for heaving the anchor, and the ship put under way.

Owing to the shortness of hands, Captain Lawrence was himself compelled to work as an ordinary sailor, and he took the wheel and steered for those waters infested by sharks.

They were reached late that night, and anchor cast, and they determined to wait until morning before they commenced their diabolical means of disposing of the mutineers.

Day dawned at last. It was bright, the sky clear, and the sun rose on a peaceful, calm sea.

After breakfast a long plank was run out from the deck over the gunwale, and battened down to prevent it tipping. Then all the mutineers were brought up on deck.

"Now," said Captain Lawrence, "I am going to give two of you a chance to swim for your lives. You can see that the

shore is not over a mile away, and I intend to have two of you walk the plank to-day, jump off and swim ashore if you can. Two more shall walk it to-morrow, and two the next day, and so on, until the last prisoner has been disposed of."

The mutineers then drew lots for the two first to be sacrificed. George Logan and Allen Todd, two sailors, drew the fatal lots. George was to go first. He stripped off all his clothing and was untied. Two men with cocked pistols stood at one end of the plank to shoot if he refused to obey.

Jack glanced at the smooth, glassy sea, and at first could see no sign of a shark. But anon the sharp back fin, cutting the water like a knife, could be seen in the distance.

"Here, George, take your place and make a rush for it," cried the captain.

The young sailor ran up the plank, and determining to reach shore if possible, sprang as far out upon the water as he could.

Scarcely had he touched the sea than the entire harbor seemed alive with flouncing, rushing monsters. They were all about the poor fellow. In vain he yelled, screamed, and fought. He had not gone half a cable's length before sharp teeth were snapping off his arms and legs, and poor George went down, leaving a crimson spot upon the water.

Allen Todd, who had been a witness to his companion's horrible death, turned upon his captain and begged and implored him to have mercy upon him. But the fiends were as inexorable as the hungry sharks.

"Come on, come on!" cried the captain. "We must get this little job over with at once."

The screaming, begging sailor was caught and placed on the plank.

"Kill me—shoot me—I will not walk it!" he cried.

"Get the pikes and push him over!" roared the captain.

Three of his myrmidons got pikes and began plunging them into the bare back, arms and legs of the doomed man.

"Over with you—over with you!" they cried.

Bleeding from half a dozen wounds, the poor fellow was pushed off the board and fell with a loud splash into the water. His companions closed their eyes, but they could hear his cries of agony and the splashing of the sharks as they sprang upon him. His cries were soon hushed, and they knew he was no more.

"You see what it is, my fine fellow! Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the fiendish captain. "You shall be the next man to walk the plank. To-morrow morning is your turn."

CHAPTER X.

THE ISLAND HOME.

"Tom," said Jack, when they had been dragged back to the hold and tied, "to-morrow is my time to walk the plank. Doubtless you will be brought out to witness it; but I am determined that they shall kill me before it is done. We can save ourselves if we try."

"How?"

"We are still eleven in number. During the night we might manage to loosen our bonds so that at a moment's notice we can dash upon them."

"That would be a good plan if it could be done."

Luke Tyrrol, who was near them at this moment, interrupted their conversation by a mysterious whist. The voice of the mate could at this moment be heard as he came down the companion ladder. A moment later he was in the hold with one of the ship's lanterns, and gazed for awhile at the helpless prisoners.

"Well, you seem to be safe enough," said the mate, after

silently contemplating the wretched boys. "I will now leave you for awhile."

No one made any answer, no one implored mercy; all were silent. They realized how utterly useless an appeal for mercy would be to that wretched monster. He went away, leaving them in darkness.

When he was gone, Luke said:

"Shipmates, I have a plan."

"What is it?" asked several in a breath.

"Whist, not so loud. We may be overheard, and then all will be lost."

Everyone became as silent as the grave, and for a few moments all listened.

No sound broke the stillness save an occasional tread of one of the officers upon the deck. In his imagination Jack thought he could hear the hungry sharks in the water, lashing it to a fury in their eagerness to be nearest the ship when the next victim was sent among them.

Luke at last said:

"Listen now, and I'll unfold a plan that will save us all. My hands are very small and wrists large, and I was so tied this morning that I can slip the cords. Now, to-night I shall release my hands and will untie every one of you, and will tie you with a false or blind knot, so that at a single jerk you can be free. When Jack is untied and put on the plank to walk it he can give the signal, and we will leap on them. We will be eleven to five, and take them completely by surprise."

Desperate as the plan might seem, it was better than such a death.

Next morning, shortly after daylight, the prisoners were all brought up to witness the terrible execution of two more of their number. Jack and Tom were selected for the two victims this morning; the bonds of all were examined to see that there was no danger of their breaking them, but Luke Tyrrol's wizard knots utterly deceived them.

Jack and Tom were silent, but both pale and trembling. Their agitation was misinterpreted, however, by the captain and his myrmidons.

As Jack took his place on the plank all eyes of the five men who were driving him to his destruction were on him. Two brace of pistols were leveled on him, and he was told that unless he walked to the end of the board and threw himself into the water he would be riddled with bullets.

His manner was that of a cringing, trembling wretch, and he continued to advance until he was just over the gunwale of the vessel, when he suddenly cried:

"Sharks!"

It seemed a very natural cry, as there were a hundred of those monsters in full view, and no one would for a moment have thought of it being a preconcerted signal. Such it was, though, and no sooner was it uttered than every man, including Captain Lawrence himself, was seized from behind and hurled to the deck with such violence as to almost take their breath.

Before they could comprehend what had happened, they were again prisoners and the boy mutineers masters of the ship.

Jack had no little difficulty in saving the lives of the captain and his crew. He succeeded, however, and weighing the anchor, they set sail and soon were beyond the harbor of sharks.

Once out in mid-ocean the five men were again set adrift in a boat with ample provisions and water to reach some inhabited island, and the *Betsy Ann*, with her crew of Boy Mutineers, again set off on her wandering for a home.

"We will now look to it that no other such mishap as that shall happen again," said Jack to his crew.

Next day, about ten o'clock in the morning, the lookout at the masthead cried:

"Land ho!"

"Where away?" bawled Jack through the speaking trumpet.

"Four points to windward."

"Can you make it out?"

"Not yet."

Jack and Luke held a whispered conversation for a few moments.

"What do you think it is, Luke?"

"An island," Luke answered. "There is no mainland within five hundred leagues of here."

"Do you think we can find it on the chart?"

"Possibly we could, yet we must not forget that there are a great many islands in these seas not on our chart."

It was not thought worth while to look, and the crew and officers waited very patiently to get a view of the land.

The vessel was changed and headed directly toward it.

"It may be the very country in which we want to live," said Jack.

They were now so near to the island that they could see it from the deck. It was quite in contrast with the Island of Desolation, as they had named the desert island which they had passed. The whole surface was a coat of the most beautiful green. The trees covered the long range of foothills running back from the coast, while to the rear of these were lofty mountains, clothed with verdure almost to their summits.

They stood upon the deck straining their eyes shoreward, watching eagerly the new land. Never did Columbus gaze upon the new-found world more fondly, anxiously, and earnestly than the boy mutineers did upon this island.

At last they were near enough to see those beautiful shores plainly with the natural eye. The vessel sailed around hunting for a harbor, and soon a bay with the wide mouth of a river, fed from the everlasting snows on the mountains of the interior, came into view. As they glided into this harbor first one and then a dozen bright copper-colored natives came out from the woods, ran down to the shore, and gazed at the ship coming in. Their numbers increased until hundreds of persons stood along the shore. They were clothed in short shirts, white knee breeches, and wore a sort of turban on their heads.

There was nothing hostile in their manner, and when at last the ship dropped anchor in the bay they sent out a dozen canoes with fruits and pearls as presents to their visitors, and made a hundred different signs inviting them to go ashore.

"Oh, py golly, dey vill gid us to dot shore und yust go in und ead us oop," said Jake.

"No, no, Jake; I am satisfied that these people are friendly," said Jack, who had been making signs and many odd nods to a great big fellow, with whom he was trying to hold a conversation.

No one was more astonished at that moment than the savage himself. Starting back with a loud cry, he gazed for a moment at the captain of the boy mutineers, and then, leaping forward again, he seized his hand and said:

"You speak de English—you speak de English?"

It was Jack's turn now to be astonished. He stood for several moments as if thunderstruck, and at last, finding his voice, he said:

"I do—where did you learn it?"

"White Queen learn me," he answered.

"Do all your people speak English?"

"No—no; only few; me and few. Nobody talkee plain but White Princess. She talkee plain."

"White Princess?" cried Jack, in astonishment. "What do you mean?"

"I mean Elsie, the White Princess. The White Princess of Churlhulac."

"Churlhulac—White Princess of Churlhulac? What do you mean?"

"Come ashore, see White Princess, she tell you all. Zukatoo no talkee much good English."

At this moment Tom came up, and Jack imparted to him what knowledge he had gained of the fellow.

"A white princess and a white queen on the island?" cried Tom in astonishment. "Can it be possible?"

"He says so, and that he learned his language from them."

"I believe, Jack, that we have at last found a place where we can live; but let us make no mistake about it. Let us go slow in this matter. Don't be led into any trap. Don't go ashore until you know you can safely do so."

"How will we arrange it?"

"I don't know, but I tell you, old fellow, we can't afford to take any chances."

"I have it. We will hold some of these fellows as hostages until I have gone ashore and seen the White Princess."

Then he called to the native with whom he had spoken, and asked:

"What is your name?"

"Zukatoo."

"Well, Zukatoo, have you a chief or general on board here with you?"

The native pointed to his own heart with no small degree of pride, and said:

"Zukatoo chief—great general. Do much fight for white princess."

"Well, General Zukatoo," said Jack, with such a degree of gravity that Tom had to turn his face away and cram his fist in his mouth to keep from laughing outright, "I am going ashore to see your white princess with some of your people, and I want you to remain here until I come back."

General Zukatoo merely grinned and nodded assent.

The cannon were then loaded, the men all put under arms as if an attack was anticipated, and Captain Errol and Ned went down into one of the native canoes and were paddled ashore.

There was none in the party with them who could speak more than a word or two of English. The party traveled in almost utter silence.

When they landed at the shore, they saw half a hundred canoes lying against the beach, and about five hundred people gathered about among the trees. They all greeted the American boys with smiles, and as they were conducted up a narrow path through a dense wood, the multitude followed.

At last they came to a village of several hundred huts, built of bamboo and wicker work. They were conducted to the largest and most central building, in which the White Princess lived. Entering a large hall, they halted and waited several minutes, when a curtain, made of hair, was pulled aside, and one of the waiting maids of the White Princess, came out and said that her lady was asleep.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ISLAND ALARMED.

"I be dog-goned if I'm not tired o' layin' here on my oars," growled Ned, after several moments of waiting. "Jest because a gal's asleep we've got to wait till she wakes up. Ef they'll let me yell larboard watch, I'll rouse her, and she'll tumble up as ef she'd struck breakers."

"But it won't do, Ned. It is death to wake a savage king or princess when they are asleep."

"Blast such customs. Why, blow my eyes, capen, there might be a gale afore she'd wake."

At this moment, however, the curtain was pulled aside, and the bright, copper face, black eyes and pearly teeth appeared, saying:

"My lady, de White Princess, be awake."

"Blasted purty gal for a savage," Ned began, but at this moment they were surprised to hear a sweet, silver-like voice say:

"White people—did you say there were white people there? I must see them."

Then the princess's maid was pushed aside, and before the astounded boys stood the prettiest girl they had ever seen. Her large blue eyes and golden hair falling in massy waves about her quaint Oriental costume, gave her the appearance of a fairy. She could not have been over fourteen or fifteen years of age, and while she wore the strange yet beautiful costume worn by the women of the island, she was American in look and appearance.

Jack bowed as he might before any princess; Ned looked amazed; and the pretty little creature came down toward the boy captain of the mutineers, and taking his hand in hers said:

"Oh, sir, you do not know how glad I am to see you; indeed, you don't. I hope you talk English."

"I do," Jack answered in amazement.

"Then I am more than glad. You are welcome to Churlhulac, and as long as you care to remain my palace shall be your home."

"Are you an English or an American girl?" Jack asked.

"No, no, I am Churlhulac; but my mother said I was to always speak English."

"You are not a native of these islands?"

"I don't know. I suppose I am. I am the White Princess, and as soon as I am old enough I shall be the Queen of Churlhulac. My mother was the White Queen."

"Your mother? Where is she?"

"She is dead," and at the thought the beautiful girl began to weep. "She died many years ago, but I can remember her, oh, so well. She had great blue eyes and hair like gold. The people would all have worshiped her, but she said it was not right. They say she brought me with her down from the sun, but I don't know——"

"I guess it's so, capen," said Ned, whose eyes were dazzled by the beauty of the White Princess. "I don't think such a gal ever grew up in this world."

Jack smiled and said in an undertone to his companion:

"No, Ned, she is just some girl who has been cast away on this island when she was young."

The White Princess, in her excitement at discovering people of her own color, had forgotten her usual hospitality. Recovering herself, she said:

"Come in my reception room, there are mats."

The half savage, half Oriental splendor of that reception-room dazzled the two American boys.

The princess bade them be seated on mats, and then reclined upon an elegant throne made of costly furs and ornamented with elegant feathers.

"How long have you been here?" she asked.

"We have but just arrived in your port."

"Where are you from?"

"Baltimore, America."

"America—I have heard of it. You must have a big canoe to come so far!"

"We have a ship, larger than this house. There are nine others on board it, and General Zukatoo is with them. Do many white people come here?"

"But very few. Some came here several years ago when

I was small, but I was taken away into the mountains and did not see them."

Jack thought he understood her history now. She had been cast upon the island while an infant, and her friends, the islanders, were afraid that the whites would take her away if they saw her. Doubtless many ships had touched at the island since she had been there, but she had seen none of them.

"How many people have you on this island?" Jack at last asked.

"Oh, many thousands. I have three thousand soldiers under General Zukatoo."

"Do you have wars?"

"Yes. We have an island about a hundred miles north of here—the Island of Bobalindig—which is nearly always at war either with us or the Nolleboalan Island. That island has a white king, and he is a great general."

"A white king?"

"Yes. He came down to them one day—upon a sunbeam, they say—and rules their country wisely and well. He taught them how to build houses, to raise barley and wheat, make mills to grind it, and now they are prosperous and happy. Even my subjects are learning the same arts. We weave cloth and make clothes now instead of dressing in skins as we used to do."

Ned reminded Jack that it was time for them to go back to the ship, as their shipmates might become alarmed at their long absence. The white princess assured them that they might make this island their home if they chose, and that a large scope of land should be set apart for them.

Jack assured her that was their intention if they would permit her to have them as her subjects.

When they reached the Betsy Ann they found the crew in a wild state of excitement and anxiety over their prolonged stay. Jake was in favor of hanging the general "Cockatoo," as he termed him, to the mast. But the return of the captain and Ned convinced all that everything was right.

Jack assured them that all was right, the people friendly, and to be trusted. He then had a long consultation with Zukatoo, and learned that the river farther up afforded an excellent harbor, where the ship would be concealed by the many bends in it and rank growth of trees.

The tide was coming in, and by getting out a warp they easily worked the ship up the stream until they came to a deep inland bay where they tied up along the shore to some trees. The banks were perpendicular and as good as a dock.

It was decided by the sailors to make their home on board the Betsy Ann for some time at least. The natives treated them with the greatest courtesy, tending their services in bringing in the ship, but never going near it without permission. The White Princess herself came down to see the great canoe, and was equally as much amazed as her subjects.

The White Princess had her slaves bring palanquins, and carry herself and the newcomers, whom she would insist had come from the sun, over the island. A large, beautiful valley was pointed out to them as their home. A large flock of goats and sheep, with some cattle, were given them. There were plenty of horses on the island. In the interior were many hundreds that were wild.

But beyond a clumsy old vehicle made from logs, there was nothing like a wagon or carriage.

In a few days the boy mutineers went to their valley home and constructed their houses. There was an abundance of tools on the ship to supply their wants. They fenced fields, and making some harness out of raw hides from the cattle, fashioned plows from the barks of trees, and harnessing horses, plowed the ground.

This was all wonderful to the natives, and increased their

admiration for the white men, whom they would insist came from the sun.

One day Jack was at work in the field, when the White Princess sent a messenger for him to come to her palace at once. The messenger was very much excited, and he trembled from head to foot. It was but two miles to the palace, and mounting his snow-white horse that stood at the door of his house, he went galloping down the road toward the capital of the island.

Seated on the beautiful bamboo veranda which surrounded the vast palace, was the White Princess. The village was alive with her native soldiers, and old General Zukatoo was in consultation with Elsie, as the White Princess called herself.

"What is the matter?" Jack asked, throwing himself from his horse, and hurrying through the excited throng to the princess.

"Oh, Jack," she cried, "the Bobalindigs have declared war against us, and great fleets of a thousand canoes are coming to take our island and murder us."

"Where are the fleets?"

She now became cooler, and explained that some of her people who had been out to sea in their fishing-boats, had drifted over until within sight of the Island Bobalindig, and learned from one of the islanders what the object of the expedition was. The Bobalindigs now had some white people to aid them in their enterprise, which gave them courage and strength. Jack concluded that the Bobalindigs must have been the savages who repulsed them when they tried to land on the island.

"We want you to help us fight this enemy," said the White Princess. "They say you have weapons of fire and thunder that kill a great way off."

"We will assist in the defense," Jack answered.

"Then I will make every one of you generals. Some must fight on water and some on land."

Jack assented to this arrangement, and finally decided to command the fleet himself.

As he hurried back to acquaint his friends how matters stood, he discovered that the whole island was alarmed.

Glittering spears, bows, arrows and slings were everywhere to be seen, while men in groups of from ten to fifty were hurrying toward the capital to join the great army assembling there.

From every point could be seen the dark-skinned soldiers hurrying to the defense of their homes.

CHAPTER XII.

A STRANGE SEA FIGHT.

The boy mutineers were all assembled in front of Jack's house when he reached their little colony, eager to hear the news.

Jack explained matters, and then added:

"Boys, I am to take charge of the Churlhulac fleet. I have a plan for the construction of a gunboat, and we will mount the two four-pounders upon it, take aboard some muskets, and make it a terror to their slings, bows, and arrows."

At mention of the new engine of warfare every man cheered. But Jack assured them that they had no time for cheering. All must get to work, as the fleet would be on them in the morning at the very latest.

Gathering up all their tools they hurried down to the Betsy Ann. To engage that big unwieldy ship in a fight with the flotilla was out of the question. Jack had a better plan.

Two hundred natives were placed at his service in the construction of the boat, and some of these he set to felling trees, others under directions of the sailors to making sweeps, others to hewing out boards.

The four of the largest, strongest canoes, were lashed two

and two together, and a raft-like platform placed on top of them, about forty feet long and fifteen wide. A sharp prow was made of broad boards in front, and boards run all around it to protect the canoes underneath, which supported the structure. A mast was put up in the center to which a sail was rigged. Three sweeps were fastened on each side, and a rudder at the stern. Then all around this strange galley, almost breast high, was placed a wall of palmetto logs, hewn into slabs to protect them from stones and arrows.

Twenty natives were put on board to do the rowing, and Jack and his crew kept only for the fighting. The two small cannon with two dozen muskets, twice as many pistols, and an abundance of ammunition, was after much difficulty hoisted aboard this strange craft, and it was ready for battle.

The new engine of war was constructed and complete before midnight. Scouts upon the mountains and along the coast had not been able as yet to see a single enemy, and Jack said that they would all sleep and rest for the morrow's struggle.

The night was pleasant, and the boy mutineers spread blankets and quilts upon the deck of the new gunboat, which Jack had named the Elsie, and slept.

At early dawn Jack was awake, and bidding Tom, who was to be second in command, to work the gunboat down the river, he went ashore and hurried along a path, guided by a Churlhulac boy. He carried a pair of revolvers, a musket, and a sword with him.

When he reached the beach the sun was just rising over the vast line of canoes that were coming toward the island. It was the war fleet of the powerful Bobalindigs.

Appitock, a native, who had been in command of the naval forces until Jack superseded him, gave utterance to a strange cry, and in less than five minutes the Churlhulacs to a man were in their canoes.

"We will push out and meet them," said Jack. "We can hold them in check until the Elsie comes, and then the fight can only end one way."

A canoe in which there were six paddles was placed at the new commodore's disposal. Appitock, who acted as interpreter, took his place in the boat and gave the command for all to launch.

Jack gazed off to the north and saw another fleet evidently six or seven times as large as the one they were about to attack, some five or six miles away, bearing down upon another part of the coast.

The conflict soon waged hot, and arrows and stones fell around them. Two men had been killed and one severely wounded in the canoe in which Jack stood by the side of Appitock. The conflict raged fiercely, and the lines of boats drew nearer and nearer.

Jack had not used his gun as yet, but now he fired it at the nearest boat, and, dropping it at the bottom of his canoe, drew his revolvers, and in a few minutes had emptied both of them. One or two of the canoes in the center of the line which they were approaching had been emptied of their living freight. Only half a dozen dead or badly wounded lay in the bottoms of the boats. But for all that the enemy greatly outnumbered them, and were closing in on them on every side!

Jack had begun to despair when the heavy, sharp report of one of their guns shook the air.

He turned about with a shout of joy, and saw the gunboat bearing down upon them. Another report shook the sea, and he saw one of the enemies' boats shivered from stem to stern.

Jack quickly ran his boat alongside the Elsie and went on board. Then began a scene of carnage. The enemy saw that they were facing destruction; their arrows stuck into the palmetto logs, and their stones harmlessly rebounded from the side of the Elsie. But one thing was left then to do, and that was flight.

Jack turned his attention now toward the cloud of canoes on the north, but they had disappeared around a point of land north of the island. The final piece of the present job was a matter of small moment, but Jack knew full well that the conflict was not yet over. If that vast army of savages had landed on the island they would make it warm work for them yet. The conflict with the navy was short work after the Elsie came among them. With screams and yells of fear the savages paddled with wild and vain toward the island of Bobalindig.

The Elsie was immediately rounded to, and Appatock was ordered to call back the other boats. He did so by putting his fingers to his lips and uttering a succession of squawls or hoarse whistles. Immediately every canoe of the Churlhulacs turned about and put in to land.

The Elsie was run into the mouth of the river and long ropes thrown out upon the shore, which the natives seized and rapidly pulled her up the stream.

Jack remained on board until the Elsie had been safely moored, and then started for the palace. It was some distance, and he was forced to make his way on foot along a narrow path in the woods. He had left orders with Tom to remove the swivels from the deck of the Elsie, and mount them on pairs of trucks to be used as field pieces.

This was no easy matter to do, as the swivels were very heavy. He reached the palace and found all the most intense excitement, though only a slender guard had been left with the princess. He hurriedly informed her of the success of the fleet.

At this moment there came the thunder of hoofs up the dusty road, and the next moment a native boy, mounted on a powerful black horse, galloped up to the palace steps, and flung himself from the animal's back. He brought the news that a wonderful large army had landed at the north end, and threatened the extinction of Zukatoo's army.

"Have courage, Elsie, my soldiers are coming. Call a runner that can talk English, and send him after them with orders to hurry."

She did so, and in ten or fifteen minutes the runner came back with the information that the guns had been mounted on trucks, and that though they had about two hundred of the islanders assisting them, they could come much faster with horses. Elsie at once sent fifty soldiers with horses to aid them.

"Ah, Jack, do you think we will be in time?"

"I hope so," he answered. "But why do you say we? You surely can have no intention of risking your life in battle?"

"Yes; why not? Am I any better than the soldiers?"

"Yes; and besides, were you to go to the battle it would only be exposing yourself all to no purpose. Should you be slain your soldiers would lose all courage. No, stay here, and when they remember that their future queen is behind them and the enemy advancing upon her, they will fight much the harder."

She realized the truth of what he said, and answered:

"I will remain, but oh! you cannot understand how I am dying of anxiety."

Again there came a clatter of horses' hoofs, and another cloud of dust was seen down the large road which led northward. A boy, mounted upon a snow-white horse, galloped up to the palace, and throwing himself from his steed, talked a few moments hurriedly with Elsie, who said:

"They have attacked Zukatoo—already the battle rages."

"Does he know how goes the battle?"

"No, it had but just commenced; but I will have another messenger soon, and he will tell me how it goes."

She was correct. In less than ten minutes another messenger came, who stated that Zukatoo had been attacked by five

great armies, each led by a white general, and that he was retreating.

"Five white generals," said Jack, shaking his head mysteriously. "I am afraid that I understand it. We are not done with Captain Lawrence yet."

At this moment the sailors with cannon appeared, each swivel was drawn by three horses, and the other animals were loaded down with ammunition.

Horses were brought for all the sailors, and Jack and his men mounted and galloped away, followed by the native grenadiers dragging the swivels behind them, at a gallop.

The road for two or three miles was quite level, then they came to a hilly part of the country.

They toiled on over the foothills and mountains. Occasionally they met messengers bearing the news that Zukatoo was hard pressed but gallantly fighting the five armies, either of which was superior in numbers to his own.

"Press on, press on!" shouted Jack, as the way grew more and more rugged. It seemed at times almost impossible to drag the small guns over the mountain sides.

Jack and Tom had just reached the top of the hill that overlooked the plain below, when they came in full view of the battling hosts.

A wild roar was on the air, and they saw the clouds of darts and stones that bore down the battling hosts.

"They are retreating, Tom, Zukatoo is defeated," cried Jack. "Bring up the guns, we must cover their retreat."

Tom wheeled his horse about, and galloped back like the wind, to hurry up the two small pieces of artillery.

They were brought to the top of the hill, and Jack and Tom by the aid of some of the natives undertook to manage them, while Luke Tyrrol, the others and twenty-five natives who had been taught the use of the musket deployed along the brow of the hill as skirmishers.

Old Zukatoo determined to die at his post rather than retreat, and had not some of his officers seized him and dragged him away from the battlefield, he would soon have been pierced with the enemy's lances.

The Churlhulacs came up the hill at a run with the vast horde of their enemies close at their heels.

Suddenly two loud thunderclaps shook the air, and both the small cannons, loaded almost to their muzzles, vomited fire and death upon the advancing horde. There were followed by a rattling volley of musketry from Luke Tyrrol's skirmishers, and the horde of savages retreated faster than they had come.

The Churlhulac army halted, and in a moment had recovered from the panic. The presence of the boy mutineers gave them courage.

Jack and Zukatoo held a council of war.

The sun was down, and no more fighting would be done that night. Jack advised falling back about three miles, and throwing up breastworks during the night, then to arm the Betty Ann and Elsie so as to not allow the enemy to retreat by the sea, and they would have them at their mercy.

Zukatoo saw the wisdom of his plan, and assented. While they were still laying their plans Tom Jones came up to them, and said:

"Jack, I have made a most wonderful discovery."

"What is it, Tom?"

"Captain Lawrence and his four scoundrels lead the Bobalindig army."

CHAPTER XIII.

ELSIE A CAPTIVE.

"Tom, we must fortify here," said Jack. "We must dig trenches and have a strong wall to defend us, for among all Captain Lawrence's bad qualities, he is not a coward, nor is he a poor general."

"You're right, shipmate. But what are we to do for spades?"

Luke Tyrrol, who had overheard the remark, and who was excellent at preparing for such emergencies as these, said:

"I thought we might have to fortify, and so I ordered a hundred of the natives to follow us with horses loaded with spades."

"It was very thoughtful of you, Luke," said Jack. "I don't know what we should do but for you."

"Tom," said Jack, when the line of defense had begun, "let's you and I go down near enough to the enemy's camp to reconnoiter."

"Whatever you dare, I will."

Arming themselves with rifles, pistols, and cutlasses, the two leaders of the boy mutineers crept from the camp and made their way down the hillside among large bowlders and dense woods. They advanced somewhat cautiously through the thick wood, and had not gone more than a mile before they heard the sound of voices engaged in conversation.

At last they were near enough to them to hear what they said, and from behind a large mass of stone could even see them. There were but four, Captain Lawrence was nowhere to be seen, and the boy mutineers began to hope that he had been slain by some of the last shots fired on the evening before.

"I don't know whether it will wash or not," the mate was saying. "One thing, however, is certain. Captain Lawrence is not going to give the thing up until he has every one of the boy mutineers swingin' at the yardarm."

The boy mutineers were almost tempted a time or two to level their rifles on them and bring down a pair of the precious scoundrels, but prudence dictated that it would not be best for them. They began their return to camp as cautiously as they could. It was no easy matter to find their way through the darkness and forest.

"They think the Churhulacs almost as good as defeated," said Tom.

"Yes, and had it not been for a few shots from those little swivels they would have been," Jack answered.

"But where do you think Captain Lawrence can be?"

"I do not know. He seemed to lead the largest of the five divisions of the great army. I don't suppose that he can intend a flank movement."

They reached the camp and were both pleased to see that the trenches were progressing so finely.

A long line of earthworks were being thrown up, and the artillery were planted, and the musketeers distributed to a good advantage.

By morning the trenches were completed, and everything in readiness. All eyes were turned upon the Bobolindig camp, expecting to see the great army moving on to the assault. The cannon were loaded, the musketeers at places by sun-up, and the bowmen had strung their bows, and placed their quivers at their feet.

Old Zukatoo and Jack advised the archers and gunners to waste no ammunition.

Suddenly a small band of not more than a score of Bobalindigs were seen advancing, holding small palm trees above their hands.

"It's a truce," explained Zukatoo. "They come to us to make treaty."

But the Bobalindigs were now near enough to make their desires known, and one of them, who spoke English, but did not understand the Churhulac language, addressed old Zukatoo, who did not understand the Bobalindig language.

"Great chief of the Churhulac, hail!"

"What my enemies have?" asked the old general.

"Peace."

"How?"

"If the Churhulac will give up the white boys and men to us and the big canoes and fire guns, we will leave the island, but if not it will be war to the death."

Old Zukatoo seemed too much choked with indignation to make an immediate answer. But as soon as he could get control over himself, he said:

"Go back to your white dogs and king, and tell them Zukatoo can die, but him can't give up him friend."

The Bobalindigs, finding that all efforts at a truce were in vain, returned to their camp, and preparations were at once commenced for an attack.

"Tom," said Jack, "I believe that our swivels if loaded with ball would reach their camp."

"Suppose we try a shot?"

"We might try one or two, but we cannot risk many."

One of the swivels was loaded, and Luke Tyrrol, who was the best gunner, sighted it. Tom stood ready with an iron rod heated at one end. When the report shook the air the ball was seen to strike the ground almost at the feet of some of the Bobalindigs who were forming, scattering the dirt all over them and putting hundreds to flight.

A thunder of horses' feet in their rear at this moment warned them that a messenger was coming.

Jack seemed to instinctively feel that some bad news was coming, and gave a great gasp for breath. The rider galloped up to their works and dismounted. Zukatoo ran to him. A few quick words from the messenger, and the brave old general uttered a wail of despair and fell upon the ground.

"What in the name of creation is the matter?" Jack demanded. It was some minutes before Zukatoo recovered sufficiently to explain. Then he cried:

"All is lost. One white chief with big army went round in boats in night. Capture palace and the white princess. Elsie is a prisoner."

CHAPTER XIV.

SHELL THROWERS.

"Captain Lawrence's work," cried Jack, as soon as he could get control of his voice.

"I know it," Tom answered.

Jack was almost prostrated by the overwhelming calamity which had suddenly befallen them, and said:

"Luke, what must we do?"

"Send back a force to seize the Betsy Ann and the Elsie. Put out to sea, and our navy can destroy theirs."

"And the cannon?"

"Must be again put on board the ships."

It became a serious question to Jack if they could reach the vessels without a collision with the enemy. But the beautiful White Princess, for whom the boys would have sold their lives, was a prisoner. What would be her fate?

Jack took Luke and Ned with five hundred natives, both cannon and a hundred horses, and started through the mountain pass at as great a rate of speed as they could go.

The enemy on their north had been thrown into confusion, and would probably not make an attack for some hours. It was so important to save the ship that Jack decided to risk the entrenched army defending itself against the enemy in front of them.

The enemy had been driven back, and turned back to join them, until they had quite a considerable army by the time they reached the creek where the ship lay.

"Well, Luke, the ships are here all right," said Jack, when they came in sight of them.

"Yes, it's lucky for us, shipmate, that they didn't find them."

But I warn you that they will not long be undiscovered. Captain Lawrence is a sailor, and he will hunt out the inlets into which we have hidden away our vessels."

The cannon were hastily placed on board the vessels, and they started out to sea. Jack waited until they were out upon the water, and saw Appitock with near a hundred canoes loaded with Churlhulac sailors join them.

He then turned about with his few followers, not over twenty, and mounted on swift-footed horses they rode to the village and palace.

They had been plundered, and were deserted by the enemy. A few of the native women could be seen wailing and tearing their hair and beating their heads against the earth.

"Where are the Bobalindigs?" Jack asked of one of them.

She answered that they were among the fields.

Being mounted on swift horses, they galloped to the south end of the island, and discovered that the enemy, with their prisoners, had but just embarked, and were paddling westward.

Nothing was left to do but return to their earthworks and assist in the battle which would surely take place as soon as the fleet under Captain Lawrence arrived.

Jack urged the horses to a run, and very soon he had reached the earthworks.

"I'm glad you came, shipmate," said Tom, as soon as the boy mutineer had thrown himself from his reeking horse. "We've repulsed one assault, but it was all we could do. They are waiting now as if they expected reinforcements, and now that we've got no cannon, I'm afraid o' the result."

Jack knew that with the start the Bobalindig fleet had they would reach the north end before their own warships did. They would have them all by morning, and something must be done.

"What are we to do, Jack, we have no cannon?" asked Tom.

Jack reflected a moment and said:

"We must invent some kind of a substitute."

"What?"

"We might bore out some of these logs and make wooden cannon. I have heard of it being done."

Tom laughed.

"We have nothing to bore out a log with," he answered.

"Then we will try something else," Jack replied. "Let us make shells out of these porous rocks. The rocks, I see, are full of holes, we might fill them with powder and put in a fuse and throw them among the Bobalindigs. One of these stones bursting would be almost equal to a shell."

"Yes, but how are we to throw them?"

"We must invent a machine for that purpose."

"How?"

"I will show you."

It was an experiment on the part of Jack. He had never heard of such an implement of war, nor had any one else. There were an abundance of stones of all sizes, round, octagon and square, perforated with holes. They were evidently made by some kind of sea insects and petrified. It was an easy matter to select hundreds and fill them with powder and put in fuses.

Jack had axes brought, and had forked trees cut and fastened in the ground about twelve feet high. A long springy pole was laid in the fork, the butt end resting upon the ground. This was flattened and holes bored, and pins fastened into it, forming a sort of basket capable of holding a thirty or forty-pound stone. In front of the fork, ten feet from it, was another pole twenty-five feet high with a pulley attachment at top, for hoisting a heavy block of stone. A hundred natives seized the rope, the lower end of which was attached to a stone weighing several tons, and ran it up to the top of the pole, or post. A stone weighing forty pounds was

placed in the basket. The holes had been filled with powder, and a fuse inserted, and all other holes plugged up. Jack lighted the fuse, and gave the command to let the heavy stone drop.

It was dropped, and, falling upon the upper end of the springy pole, struck it so suddenly to the earth as to throw the basket end upward like a flash and send the shell flying high into the air.

It exploded when almost over the camp of the Bobolindigs.

"The thing will work," said Tom.

Though the stone did no harm in itself, the explosion in the air startled some of the Bobalindigs, and they ran to their canoes.

Their four white generals had to use all their influence to prevent a panic and their putting to sea at once.

Their shell throwers had proved such a success that they put up a dozen more machines along the line of works.

Every one was tested and proved to possess powder sufficient to throw a heavy stone three or four hundred yards.

The hillside was full of round stones that were perforated with holes, and but little more than shells. The holes in the stones were filled with powder and fuses inserted. Half of the stones thrown as tests exploded, some on the ground, but most of them in the air. Of course nothing like accuracy could be obtained with them.

The natives had watched those heavy stones flying through the air and exploding, but the fear they had entertained at first seemed to decrease.

"Well, Tom, if the scare will only last long enough we will be able to keep them from carrying our works by storm."

"But, shipmate, I'm afraid it won't. They will learn that the things are not so dangerous as they seem."

Jack and Tom then began to talk of the captured princess, who was in the fleet of the Bobalindigs that were coming round to join the land force.

"She is a strange girl, Tom," said Jack. "I will warrant that she has a remarkable history, if we could only get it. It must be a most wonderful history."

"She is the child of some castaway, there can be no doubt of it."

"Do you know, Tom, that that girl has a wonderful resemblance to you?"

"To me?"

"May it not be that your sister's boat drifted to some of these islands, and that she was adopted as the White Princess, and this Elsie is her?"

"By George, Jack, I had never thought of that. Elsie would just be of about the right age for my sister. Jack, Jack, we must do something to save her from Captain Lawrence, for after all she may be my sister."

"Captain," cried one of the mutineers, hurrying up at this moment, "a large fleet has hove in sight."

"It is the fleet under Captain Lawrence, bringing in the captive princess," said Jack.

"Oh, how I wish we were strong enough to swoop down upon them and recover her," said Tom.

"But we are not," Jack answered. "We must depend upon strategy, for we can do little or nothing by main force."

CHAPTER XV.

A DEFEAT.

The wild yells from the Bobalindig camp announced the return of the fleet.

Jack and Tom had field-glasses with them, and they swept

that part of the sea until they spied the canoe in which the poor little white princess sat a captive.

"I see her," said Jack.

"So do I," Tom returned.

"Poor girl, how she suffers."

"There is that villainous Captain Lawrence in the same boat with her. Oh, how I would like to send a bullet through him. I tell you, Jack, that should he ever fall into our power again he will not be spared."

By the time Captain Lawrence and his fleet had landed with the fair young prisoner the day was almost spent. The last canoe had just been hauled up on the sandy beach when the Betsy Ann and the gunboat Elsie appeared around a bit of headland.

"Confound such luck!" cried Tom. "They are too late! Had they been an hour earlier they could have headed off the fleet."

Jack saw with no small degree of uneasiness the horde of black-skinned warriors pouring in from the canoes. He had lost confidence in his new patent shell-throwers, for now the natives had become more accustomed to them, and besides, they were not so effective as they had seemed.

"Tom, we will have a terrible battle on tomorrow," said Jack. "Now what do you say to selecting half a dozen bold natives and stealing down to their camp in the night and rescuing Elsie?"

"The very thing I was thinking about, Jack, for, like you, I believe we are going to get a sound licking to-morrow."

Jack knew a brave young Churlhulac named Samoa who spoke English, and he asked him to select five discreet, brave, determined followers for the undertaking. He explained that it must be a secret undertaking, and not known to any of the others.

Near midnight, with Tom and the six natives, Jack left the works and crept down the hill on the west side, which was covered with a dense growth of trees and bushes.

Samoa took the lead of the others, and his keen ears and sharp eyes were invaluable. Suddenly he came to a halt.

It was so dark now that an object could not be seen a foot away. Samoa made his followers to understand they must lay down for a few moments, and he crept on into the darkness.

He had been gone but a few moments when there was a slight struggle and a gasp, but the boy mutineers heard no more.

But a moment later Samoa returned, and made them to understand all was over. The fellow knew every foot of the island, and where sentries were most likely to be posted, so he guided them carefully through darkness and forest, until he at last came to a halt.

He now came to Jack and whispered:

"We be among them."

The boy mutineers listened.

Their trusty guide whispered to all to be still, and then by some strange sign, made by touching the hand of a single companion, indicated that he should follow him.

The two glided noiselessly away, leaving a trail of bent bushes behind them, by which Jack could more plainly see a campfire, not twenty paces away. Around the fire lay half a dozen or more dark forms, evidently asleep.

Two were sitting erect upon the ground, their backs toward them, facing a slight figure which, in the uncertain light, Jack made out to be Elsie, the pretty little princess.

The boys stood, each with cocked pistols, ready to die fighting should they be discovered. The Churlhulacs who remained with them fitted arrows to their bows and waited.

Samoa and his companion had disappeared, and Jack began to almost believe they had deserted them. Each moment

seemed an age, and Jack found himself growing quite nervous.

At last both of the two sentries silently sank to the earth as if they had fallen over in slumber. Jack could hardly realize that a deadly knife had done the work, and that they were asleep in death.

A few moments later three forms rose and glided swiftly but noiselessly toward the bushes, where our boy mutineers waited. It was Samoa, his companion, and Elsie. Though the boy mutineers' hearts leaped wild with excitement and joy, they retained their presence of mind and suppressed the shouts which rose to their lips.

A moment was given for breathing, and then they began to return. It was by no means as easy a task as coming, and that had been difficult enough.

So much time had been consumed that Jack knew it must be long past midnight. Samoa seemed to know everything by instinct. If a sentry was in their path he knew it before any others could see or hear him. Every moment seemed an age to Jack and Tom, as they, each holding one of Elsie's hands, crept through the bushes after Samoa and his followers.

A ripple of excitement in their rear was followed almost immediately by a yell, which aroused the whole Bobalindig army. The yell was taken up and swelled into such a roar that it seemed to shake land and sea.

"We're discovered," said Tom.

"No talkee—come," whispered Samoa, and he plunged on into the thicket. The yelling, shouting and uproar at their rear continued to grow louder and louder.

Then from spies and outposts there rose cries of rage, showing that our friends were surrounded.

"What is it all? what does it mean?" they heard the voice of the mate of the Betsy Ann ask.

"The white princess has been rescued from our camp," the hated Captain Lawrence answered. "The whole army is roused, and it's nearly daylight. We shall begin the attack before they get back."

"Who did it?"

"No doubt it was Jack and Tom, or some of the boy mutineers. I will never rest until they swing at the yardarm."

The voices were directly in front of the fugitives, and they paused a moment to allow them to go on, but they began advancing toward them.

Day had now begun to dawn, and the outline of the mate could be faintly seen. Samoa bent his bow and sent the arrow whizzing through his body, and he fell.

A wild yell rose on the air, and the arrows whizzed close to the ears of the fugitives.

"Here they are! Down with them!" cried Captain Lawrence.

"Bang, bang!" went Jack's and Tom's pistols, and Captain Lawrence, not knowing how many might be there, ran away.

At this moment the sharp, heavy report of a swivel was heard from the sea. Luke Tyrrol had run the Elsie in near enough to the beach to fire a shot on shore.

Samoa had led his friends up the steep hillside, and all about them could be seen long lines of the enemy advancing upon the works.

Clouds of arrows were already flying, and the sharp rattle of musketry from the works were heard.

"Why don't they throw the shells from the catapults?" Jack said.

At this moment one was seen to go hissing through the air, and when almost over the fugitives it exploded, sending pieces of stone in every direction.

"We are in about as much danger from friends as foes," said Jack.

"Yes, between two fires."

"Muchee fightee," said Samoa, gazing about upon the scene.

The Betsy Ann and Elsie had both been hauled in as close to the shore as they could get, and were rapping away with the swivels at the Bobalindigs on shore. The rearguard, left to look after the canoes, was soon driven up into the woods.

The shell-throwers were now sending stones flying through the air. Some exploded, and some did not, but altogether doing but little execution.

The muskets and arrows, however, were doing deadly work. Though the Bobalindigs were mowed down like grass before the scythe, they continually pressed on up the hill, made slippery from the blood of the slain.

Jack and Tom, with the white princess, and their guides, were now within a hundred paces of the works, but had not been recognized by their friends.

Jack went before and Tom behind Elsie to shield her from arrows and stones, of which the air was filled.

Two of the guides were shot down—one by their own friends.

They were not recognized until within twenty paces of the trenches, when Jake Brinesky suddenly leaped on the top breastwork and yelled:

"Py sheemany goodness, dat vos Shack, yah, dot vas Shack und Tom mit de von leetle gal!"

Their friends recognized them now, and half a hundred Churhulacs leaped the works and ran down to hurry them in and cover their retreat.

They reached the fort in safety, above which the boy mutineers, out of patriotism, were flying the stars and stripes.

The run up hill had almost exhausted Jack and Tom, and as for Elsie, she was almost ready to swoon.

The long lines of savages were coming up in solid phalanx, and Jack soon discovered that they would be unable to stop the horde.

Their guns and pistols were emptied, quivers of arrows were exhausted, and still they pressed on closer and closer. Jack knew that defeat was certain.

"Tom," said Jack, "we've got to knock under. For myself, I don't care. I would as soon die as live the miserable life we have been forced to live; but let us make one more effort to save Elsie. Let you and I take her and run for our lives. If we can make it to the coast, and by securing some canoe, put to sea, we may reach the Betsy Ann and escape with her."

"You are right," said Tom.

Calling Jake and the others to their side, they fled up the hillside toward the mountains with the frightened Elsie.

In the meanwhile the horde of Bobalindigs captured the fort, and sent the Churhulacs who had escaped, slaughter flying in every direction. The chances of escaping their vengeance was slim, for soon they would have the entire island in their possession.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WHITE KING.

"Stop, Tom, see, Elsie has fainted!"

"Oh, Jack, what shall we do?"

Both the boy mutineers gathered about the white princess, who, unable to keep up, had swooned from fright and exhaustion.

"Oh, Tom, listen, what a horrid noise!" some one said.

The boy mutineers had halted in a secluded glen in the mountains, where they were hidden from their pursuers.

"All is up with us, shipmates," said a young sailor. "Cap-

tain Lawrence will soon have us hunted down, and we will be fed to the sharks."

"Never say die, shipmate," another answered.

Jack had been so busily engaged in restoring Elsie to consciousness that he had paid no attention to the conversation.

She began to recover and then he arose and looked about him, leaving her to the care of Tom. All the boy mutineers were present. Not one of them had been wounded in the fight.

"Load your guns and pistols at once," Jack said. "We will die with the harness on."

Elsie recovered very rapidly, but was so weak she had to be carried. The sounds of pursuit were coming nearer, and taking her up, the boy mutineers again hurried farther up the mountain pass. She recovered rapidly, and realizing that those who carried her needed all their strength, insisted on being permitted to walk.

"You are too weak," said Jack Errol.

"No, I am stronger than you think," she answered. "I can walk—please allow me to walk?"

Being thus urged, she was permitted to have her way. But Jack and Tom went on either side of her to support her, in case she became faint, or to protect her from attack.

"Tom, our only hope is to get across the island and reach the ship."

"I know it, but it will be almost impossible to do that, without meeting some of the Bobalindigs, who seem to be scattered all over this end of the island."

"But listen to the Elsie. She is still blazing away at the boats."

The heavy crack of the swivels could be heard. When they halted again to rest, Jack climbed a tree from whence he could see the shore, and the odd little gunboat blazing away at the few natives who still tried to defend the canoes. Those who were attempting the defense were cut down by the shot and balls from the swivels, or picked off by the riflemen.

"One thing is certain, Tom," the boy mutineer said, on his rejoining his companions.

"What?"

"The Bobalindigs will never get away from this island. Their boats are wholly destroyed. If not destroyed, they will be before the Elsie is done bombarding them."

"But that won't help us much if the infuriated savages are left to prey upon us."

"We must get aboard."

"Easier said than done. Our way to the coast is even now cut off."

"How do you know?"

"I saw at least five hundred of the Bobalindigs going through the narrow pass below us, across the island north-east, and they are on the watch for us."

A cloud came over Jack's face. They had no show whatever from the present appearance to escape. Should they fall into the hands of the Bobalindigs, the boy mutineers would be turned over to Captain Lawrence, and there was no doubt of what their fate would be.

"Oh, for a hundred men armed with Winchester rifles!" groaned Jack.

"You couldn't make a more profitable wish, but it will do you no good," answered Tom. "We are in for it. It is out our way through those Bobalindigs or die."

"Then, small as our chances are, we will cut through them."

Jack communicated his intentions to the handful of followers about him, and they all vowed that they would make their way through at the risk of their lives.

At this moment a tremendous cry that seemed to make the island tremble reached their ears.

"What means that?" asked Jack.

"Let us see," Tom answered.

It was but a few paces to a bluff which the boy mutineers scaled, and from which they overlooked the scene below. Old Zukatoo could be seen in the plain, striving to rally his scattered forces.

"He is going to make another stand!" cried Tom.

The northern part of the plain below was almost black with Bobalindigs, who seemed thrown in confusion. The boy mutineers could distinctly see Captain Lawrence and two or three other white men busying themselves trying to induce the blacks to press on—to fight the Churlhulacs, who had evidently determined to make a stand.

"I wish we were in range of them," said Tom. "I would like to get a shot at Captain Lawrence."

"Bide your time, Tom. It will come, and you will be within gunshot of him yet."

"Look, Tom!" cried Jack, pointing in the direction of the foot of the hills. "Where did all those natives come from?"

"Yah, dot vos so, ver did tey koom from, anyway, py sheemany?"

"The white king! the white king!" cried one of their Churlhulac followers, clapping his hands with joy.

"Who is the white king?" Tom asked.

"He is king of the Island of Nolleboalon," Jack answered.

"He is a friend to Elsie."

"Then we are all right."

"Yes, we are saved now, for the white king will drive the Bobalindigs back into the sea."

From their elevated position our friends had an excellent view of the scene below.

It presented a very striking and exciting picture. To the north were great bodies of bowmen and Bobalindigs armed with spears and slings. Back of them, in the water and upon the beach, were the boats shattered and ruined by the shot and balls of the gunboat Elsie, which was still pounding away at them. On the south, coming down from the pass all along the mountainside, was a constant stream of black warriors, whose burnished spears gleamed brightly in the sun.

The white king was at their head.

Jack fixed his glass upon the tall, manly form, and saw that he was a strong, courageous fellow, with an intelligent face and noble bearing.

"There's a man who is in reality a king," said Jack.

A loud cry from one of the natives below attracted their attention, and quickly turning his head, Jack saw down the rocky slope below them over one hundred of the Bobalindigs climbing up among the boulders to assault them on the north.

"Quick here, lads!" he cried to his companions. "Get your rifles and let them have it."

Swift as eagles in their flight flew the boy mutineers to arms, and running down the slope, took up their position behind stones and boulders.

Two shots were fired and one of them missed.

"Be careful," cautioned Jack, "we have no ammunition to waste."

He took up his position against a large stone and sent a shot whizzing down at a great burly savage that was climbing up the hillside. In a moment a dark form was seen to roll limp and lifeless down the slope until it was checked by a huge crag jutting out from the hillside.

Then the sharp report of firearms rang out all along the bluff. The echoes reached the ears of the white king, who was marching his forces against the Bobalindig hosts. Those were the first rifle shots he had heard for years. They reached the ears of Captain Lawrence and his cruel followers, who realized that their days were numbered.

But the Bobalindigs attacking the boy mutineers soon learned that it was folly to attempt to drive them from their stronghold, and beat a precipitate retreat.

"What have they done? Oh, what have they done?" Elsie asked from her safe retreat behind a large, flat stone.

"They have gone," cried Tom.

"Fled," answered Jack.

"Then we are safe," sobbed poor Elsie, who had been terribly frightened.

"For the present, but our final safety depends upon the white king," returned Jack. "Unless he has a force sufficiently strong to overthrow the Bobalindigs under Captain Lawrence we are lost."

"Yah, vos dot so?" asked Jake.

"It is true, Jake," put in Tom.

"Den let us go und gif dot king some help mit fightin' dem Bobalinks."

Jack took the precaution this time to have Elsie brought with them, and kept her in their midst. That the enemy were watching closely for some opportunity to seize her and hold her captive, perhaps as a hostage, there could be no doubt.

There was danger, should they succeed in capturing her, of forcing the Churlhulacs to give up the boy mutineers in exchange for her. Though old Zukatoo was a faithful friend, and would stand by the American youths against all opposition to himself, yet his love for the white princess might force him to a treaty, which would sacrifice Jack and his friends.

Together, with Elsie in their midst, the little band once more climbed to the top of the ridge which overlooked the valley below.

Here a grand sight met their view. Two powerful armies were marshaling their hosts, and advancing to the conflict. Zukatoo and the remnant of his depleted army hung in the rear, and the white king's fresh troops took the front.

Suddenly there was a great blast of horns, and the sky was darkened with arrows and stones; then the two armies hurled themselves together, grappling in deadly combat.

CHAPTER XVII.

FATHER AND SON.

"Py sheemany gootness, dot vas von pig knockdown," cried the excited Jake.

Jack's eye flashed and his cheek glowed with battle. He saw the crimson tide of war swaying back and forth and longed to hurl himself upon the foe. But what was to be done with Elsie? They dared not leave her unprotected, lest the band of Bobalindigs which they had repulsed should return and make her a captive.

A brilliant thought came to Jack's mind. He noticed that old Zukatoo was rallying his forces, and preparing to leave a large body in reserve.

"Come, Tom, let us hasten down there with Elsie and leave her," cried Jack. "She will have a strong guard of friends, and we can then go ahead and take part in the fight."

"Yah, I dink some on dem dings myself," cried Jake.

In a few moments the boy mutineers were hastening with their friends toward the Churlhulacs in reserve.

Old Zukatoo had just succeeded in selecting a hundred of the best and freshest of his men to assist the white king when Jack came up.

"Here is the white princess!" cried Jack. "Place a strong guard about her; we want to go into the fight."

"Zukatoo will."

Then the old warrior gave utterance to a few words of command to some of his men, and they gathered about the white princess four columns deep.

"Come, shipmates!" cried Jack. "We can depend upon it that she will be well cared for. Let us hasten forward to the fight."

"Huzza! Now, boys, see that Captain Lawrence and his men have no quarter."

"Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted everyone.

In the meanwhile the roar of battle could be heard. That conflict was one almost impossible to describe. The roar of battle up and down the hills on the northern part of the island seemed to almost reach the vaults of Heaven.

As the Boy Mutineers ran forward to take part in the fight they saw the dim outlines of armies enveloped in clouds of dust, arrows and stones. Occasionally they met the wounded coming to the rear. One poor fellow had a jaw broken, another was pierced in the cheek with an arrow, which he had broken off in trying to pull it out. Then came others with various wounds, all attesting the severity of the conflict.

They were now almost within reach of the missiles falling like rain.

"You bedder luke a leetle oud or you vill get some hurtet mit yourself," cried Jake.

A stone struck Jack on the shoulder, but its force was so well-nigh spent that it only made a slight bruise.

"On, shipmates! The gale has come!" he shouts, and they dash forward like meteors through whistling arrows and humming stones.

They come up just as the fight is raging hottest, and their guns belched forth fire and death. The explosion of musketry seems to appal the Babolindigs, and many throw down their arms and fly.

Two of the white leaders fall at the first fire, and Captain Lawrence does all in his power to rally his frightened hosts.

Someone touches Jack's shoulder just as he is reloading his gun, and turning about he sees the White King.

"Are you an American sailor?" the man asks, in a voice that seems to thrill the youth.

"I am."

"So was I once."

"So I supposed; but we will talk of this after the battle is over."

"I mentioned it because I have a favor to ask of you."

While the above dialogue was going on the battle was raging furiously, and the speakers had to shout in order to be heard.

"What?" asked Jack.

"Lend me your rifle."

"Why, sir, can't I use it?"

"But I see an old enemy whom I want to slay. Hand it to me that I may shoot him down."

Jack made no answer, but passed over the gun.

The lines of battle had changed considerably in the last few minutes. The Bobalindigs had been driven back by the Nolleboalons until their rear lines had almost reached the beach.

Jack had scarce given up his gun when he saw his old enemy, Captain Lawrence. He was justified in his regret that he had not kept his trusty rifle himself. Captain Lawrence had forfeited his right to live. It was either his life or Jack's, and the youth tried to get near enough to hit him with his pistol.

The savages were in places mingled among each other, fighting with spears and battle-axes, hand to hand, but Lawrence was too far away from where the boy mutineer stood for him to reach him with his pistol.

Twice he fired, but the bullets fell short. Jack was trying to get nearer to him, when he observed the white king raise the rifle which he had borrowed from our hero, take deliberate aim and pull the trigger.

As the sharp report rang out upon the air the captain tossed his arms wildly upward, and fell forward upon the ground.

A yell went up from the boy mutineers when the captain fell; their persecutor was no more; never would they have felt at ease while he lived.

The last one of the white leaders of the Babolindigs had fallen, and the natives retreated. The Nolleboalons, aided by the Churhulacs, pressed them closely, and they broke and fled toward their boats. But these they found almost completely destroyed by the swivels from the Elsie, which had been hauled in close to shore within pistol-shot of the beach.

The swivels had been loaded with swan shot and slugs, and sent a rain of destruction among the natives.

Loud were the shrieks and cries uttered by the survivors, who ran down the beach, breaking through the ranks of the Nolleboalons, and hiding in the wood.

"That has settled them," said the white king, who was standing at Jack's side. He then turned to one of his men, and commanded him to call off the pursuit. The native officers blew some horns and conch shells, which had a wonderful effect on the Nolleboalons. The pursuit and slaughter ceased.

"The battle is over, shipmate, and the victory won," said the white king, turning to Jack, and handing his rifle to him.

"You have saved us," Jack answered.

"I am glad to have been able to do so. But tell me, is that your ship that I see in the offing?"

"It is."

"Why are you on shore?"

"We have come here to live, to make this island our home."

The white king gazed at the youth in astonishment for a few moments, and then said:

"Make this island your home! Do you prefer to live among savages?"

"No, sir."

"Then there is something strange about this," and the white king seemed to have a look of severity on his face.

Jack, wishing to disabuse the mind of the white king as much as possible of any wrong impression he might have of himself or his shipmates, said:

"That ship you see is the Betsy Ann. We were a part of her crew. The captain and officers were so cruel that we had to mutiny. It would not have been done, sir, had not the captain sworn to take our lives. He boasted that he was to be paid five thousand dollars if I was never brought back alive."

A strange look came over the face of the white king. His eyes sparkled, and his cheeks seemed to glow with uncontrollable emotions.

"Who was to pay him five thousand dollars?" he asked.

"He would not tell me."

"But you must have had some suspicion?"

"I did. My uncle."

The white king seemed to be seized with a peculiar choking sensation. He tried to speak, but failed, and his knees trembled so that he scarce could stand. At last he sank upon a large stone and buried his face in his hands.

Jack began to fear that he had received a wound in the battle which had been unnoticed until now. He sprang to his side and said:

"Sir, are you hurt? Maybe your wound is more severe than you think."

"I haven't a scratch," the white king answered, uncovering his face. "I can't explain my conduct now, but I will after awhile. But let us go and hunt the body of my enemy, whom I have slain."

"Your enemy? You shot Captain Lawrence!" cried Jack in amazement.

"Yes, I shot Captain Lawrence. He is my enemy."

"Your enemy!" cried Jack. "Have you ever met him before?"

"Yes," answered the white king. "Years ago I was the master of a ship. He was the mate and got up a mutiny. I was

seized and put on a desert island, where the Nolleboalons found me and made me their king. But let us go and find him."

Tom, Jake, and some of the other boy mutineers followed them to the spot where Captain Lawrence had fallen. The captain was not dead, but he was dying.

"Abraham Lawrence, don't you know me?" asked the white king.

Lawrence opened his guilty eyes, and for several moments fixed his gaze upon the white king. At last he said faintly:

"You are Captain George Errol, whom I set ashore on the desert island so many years ago."

"I am."

"Well, Captain Errol, that sailor boy at your side," pointing to Jack, "is your son."

"My son—my son!" cried the White King, clasping the astounded Jack in his arms. "I knew it—oh, I knew it!"

For a few moments a strange silence fell on the group, but it was broken by the dying man saying:

"Captain Errol, I am dying. I have but a few moments of life left. I have a strange story to tell—one that greatly concerns yourself and your son. Now, listen while I tell it."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MORE MYSTERIES.

"You will all think that I am a very bad man," said Captain Lawrence, faintly. "You know that I have been very cruel, but bad and cruel as I have been, I have never been quite so bad as others. Your brother, Isaac Errol, has been far more cruel to you, George Errol, than I have been."

"Tell me all about him."

"I will in a few moments. My breath seems growing very short."

"But tell the story quickly while you can. Did my brother hire you to set me off on the island to perish?" asked Captain Errol.

"He did. He hired me to dispose of you in some way."

"How much did he pay you?"

"Five thousand dollars." He was growing visibly weaker every moment, as could be plainly seen.

"Did he hire you to drown my son, Jack Errol?"

"He did."

"What motive did he have for this?"

"Your grandfather, Charles Errol, it seems, was a miser, and died while you were at sea, leaving half a million dollars in gold for you and your brother. Your brother wanted it all, and he hired me to put you out of the way, which I thought I had done by leaving you to perish on the desert island, reporting you drowned."

"But when the boy grew up, he was afraid that he would discover that he was heir to half the fortune, and decided to put him out of the way. He employed me to bring him back on this voyage, and if he never came back I was to have five thousand dollars. That's all."

"I knew it—I knew you were my son almost from the moment I saw you," said the captain as he led Jack away from the seat of carnage.

"How did you know it?" the boy mutineer asked.

"By your remarkable resemblance to your dead mother."

"Don't blame us for the mutiny, father," said Jack.

"I do not."

"True, I was ringleader in it; I instigated my shipmates to it, but we were forced to do it in order to save our own lives. Oh, father! you know not what a tyrant he was——"

"I understand it all," answered the white king, pausing to rest by a large block of stone. "You can never be blamed for doing what you have done, especially since he was guilty of

the same crime. He inaugurated a mutiny, not from tyrannical oppression, but because he would receive a reward for having put me to death."

"I shall feel easier now that I have learned that," said Jack.

The boy mutineer and his father were sitting in the shade of some tropical trees, and to Jack it seemed impossible that this man could be his father. So strange, wild and romantic had been the adventures of the last few weeks that they seemed more like a romance than reality.

Suddenly Tom, who had remained at the side of the dying captain, came up to where father and son were, and said:

"It is all over, shipmate."

"What do you mean, Tom? Is he dead?"

Tom nodded his head.

"He deserved it," the white king answered.

"Yes, if ever man deserved to die he did," said Tom.

Jack introduced Tom Jones to his father, and Captain Errol well remembered Tom's father who had died at sea so many years ago.

"We had better move back toward the town and palace," said Tom. "There are three or four hundred Bobalindigs yet, and they might take it into their heads to go there and destroy the place."

"The suggestion is a good one," said Captain Errol. "I will send a few of the swiftest bowmen ahead to prevent any such destruction, and we will follow."

Jake and two other boy mutineers were sent under a guard of fifty Nolleboalons to get the ship around to the harbor in front of the town.

Jack, his father and Tom then joined Zukatoo and a small party of the Churlhulacs, who were the body guard for the white princess.

An advance guard of Nolleboalons were already a mile or two ahead of them, and the armies of Nolleboalon and Churlhulao followed.

Elsie was faint and weak from the excitement, and was placed upon a rude litter made for her, Tom walking upon one side of her and Jack on the other, while in front went her faithful brave old Zukatoo, and close after followed the white king.

"You need have no more fears," said Jack, to the little princess.

"I have none," she answered, with an assuring smile. "Surrounded by such brave friends as I have, it would be ungrateful in me to have any fears."

The journey was made slowly, and night had set in before the head of the army had reached the capitol.

As they came within hearing loud shouting greeted their ears, and they saw bright flames leaping into the air.

Drawing nearer the sounds of conflict fell upon their ears. Evidently a fierce fight was raging between the advance of the Nolleboalons and Bobalindigs.

"The wretches who escaped have hurried around by the coast to burn the capitol," cried the king. "Let us hasten forward and punish them for it."

He blew a shell, and immediately a horde of bowmen and spearsmen rushed about him. The order to advance was sounded, and all save Jack and a strong bodyguard for Elsie dashed forward into the fray.

The enemy were hurled backward, driven like frightened sheep toward the beach, where the Betsy Ann and the Elsie coming up began pouring grape and cannister into them.

They had now reached the capitol, and found several of the young sailors and a host of natives fighting the flames. The White King, Tom and some of the boy mutineers were making extraordinary efforts to save the palace.

At the risk of his life Tom ran into the palace to try to save some of the royal treasure and furniture if possible. Out-

tomans, rich rugs, diamonds, pearls, and gold and silver ornaments were carried out. It was thought that the entire palace would be destroyed by flames, and Tom determined to save what he could.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUSION.

Jack halted the natives carrying the rude litter on which Elsie was being borne in the edge of the town, and placing a guard about her, he ran forward to help in the extinguishment of the flames.

Hundreds of natives were stationed all about and well up the sides of the massive building, and with rude buckets were almost deluging it with water.

"You will extinguish the fire yet," cried Jack to the white king, as he passed him.

"I hope so, yet I think it best to get all the royal treasure out of the palace.

"Where is Tom?"

"Inside the palace, and in danger of losing his life."

"He must come out of there," cried Jack. He plunged into the building through stifling smoke and blistering heat. On every side could be heard the wild crackling of the flames.

"Tom! Tom!" cried Jack.

"Ay, ay, shipmate," came a cheery response from the gloom.

"What are you doin'?"

"I have found an old chest, shipmate, which I am trying to get out. It may have a story to tell."

Jack groped his way through blinding smoke to his friend, and said:

"Can I help you?"

"Yes, take that end. I don't know why, but I am determined to save this old wooden chest."

Jack seized the end next to him and they started staggering through smoke and heat, and finally they came to the open door, through which they staggered into the clouds of hissing steam. The lads were almost exhausted, and Tom dropped his end of the wooden chest. It fell upon the ground with such force that the end bursted, and a roll of papers fell out.

The white king uttered a shout to some natives and they sprang forward and dragged the heavy chest away. Jack Errol picked up the roll of manuscript, which was in danger of being ruined from the water that fell in showers from the roof of the palace.

"Tom, Tom!" cried Jack. "Here is something remarkable. Here are more mysteries."

"What is it, Jack?" Tom asked, panting for breath.

Jack had glanced at the manuscript which had fallen from the old wooden chest.

"Listen! This says that it is the 'Narrative of Mrs. Eleanor Cody Jones.'"

"What! that was my mother's name!" cried Tom, becoming greatly excited.

"Here is more!" cried Jack.

"Read it."

"This is for the benefit of my daughter, Elsie Jones, the White Princess of the Churlhulacs, and not to be opened until her eighteenth birthday."

Jack dropped the manuscript in his astonishment, and seized his friend's hand.

"Tom!" he cried, "Elsie is your own sister."

Trembling with strange emotions Tom staggered away to a banyan tree, beneath which he sat and unrolled the precious manuscript. Suffice to say it contained a history of Tom's mother and sister after the wreck of her husband's vessel, at which time he lost his life. Tom's mother and sister had drifted to this island in a boat, and she had been made queen of the savages. The narrative was spread out, but Tom had

read enough to fill his soul with joy. It was his mother, and the beautiful white princess was his own long-lost sister. Unable longer to withhold the joyous news, the boy mutineer ran to the white princess, and said:

"Oh, Elsie, Elsie, little sister!" and clasped her in his arms.

The flames had by this time been extinguished, and old Zukatoo and his followers came to the princess, to inform her that all the Bobalindigs had been captured, and wished to know if they should be slaughtered.

"No," she answered. "Have them all promise in the presence of the rising sun to be loyal and faithful to Zukatoo, and never make war on the Churlhulacs, or the Nolleboalons again, and then they can go."

The Betsy Ann and the little gunboat Elsie ran into the harbor, and Luke Tyrrol and the others came ashore, where they were astounded to learn that Jack had found a father and Tom a sister among the savages.

"Well, what will you do now, father?" Jack asked.

"Go back to the United States of America," he answered. "I have no desire to pass the remainder of my days with savages."

"But will we dare go back? We are mutineers."

"What if you are? Was not he a mutineer? I know the owners of the Betsy Ann, and I can make it all satisfactory."

"And your sister, Tom?" Jack asked, after a moment's silence.

"She must go with me from this island. I can never think of going away and leaving her here."

Zukatoo was called over, and he listened to the strange story which was told him by the white king, and when informed that Elsie was Tom's sister, and he had come for her, he consented to give her up.

The boy mutineers remained three days on the island of the Churlhulacs, and were feasted by their friends. They gave them the gunboat Elsie; two swivels, twelve muskets and several kegs of ammunition, and then with Captain Errol they went on board the Betsy Ann. Her anchor was hoisted and sails unfurled, Elsie and her brother with Jack waving handkerchiefs at their friends along the shore.

Luke Tyrrol was at the wheel, and the good ship was soon under weigh, the island fading from view. The subsequent history of the Islanders is not known.

The Betsy Ann made her voyage, disposed of her cargo, and returned to the United States, and the boy mutineers were commended for their conduct. Captain George Errol's sudden return caused the flight of his brother Isaac. George Errol soon secured his rights, and proposes to pass the remainder of his days in peace. Jack has just been made captain of a merchantman, and Tom and Luke Tyrrol are his mates. Jake and Ned are in the crew. The other day I met Jake on the street.

"I vant to told you somedings," he said. Then he led me to a corner, and added: "Ef ye don't peliefe it, dot young Captain Jack Errol vas agoin' to marry dot leedle gal Elsie, de Vite Princess mit dem Gumshelacks, und doan'd you forget it."

THE END.

Read "ALWAYS READY; or, THE BEST ENGINEER ON THE ROAD," by Jas. C. Merritt, which will be the next number (510) of "Pluck and Luck."

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THINGS OF INTEREST.

There is a certain risk in making a child "show off," says the London Chronicle. It is a risk that few parents and guardians are unwilling to take, however; and the nursery governess was no exception to the rule when she came down with her charges to the dining-room at Sunday dinner, just a week after she had undertaken to train their young ideas. Natural history was her strong point, and she began with natural history. "Now, tell us all, Johnny, what worm is responsible for mother's beautiful silk dress," she said encouragingly, as dessert was put on the table. "Father," answered Johnny, without the smallest hesitation. The fond mother sometimes goes too far. "Haven't you anything to say to the lady, dear?" asked one of these of her little girl, who had been seized with shyness in a friend's house. "Tell the lady who killed Abel, then." "Cain," faltered the child, thus prompted to make light conversation. "And who beheaded Charles I?" proceeded the proud parent. "Cromwell," said her daughter, obediently. "Wonderful!" ejaculated their hostess, taking a polite interest in this recital of historic tragedies. The mother smiled, as though to show that this was but a specimen of her child's prowess. "Now," she went on exultantly, "tell the lady what you are going to have in three days' time." "Measles," answered the infant prodigy.

Rubbish and trash in New York are sold under bids each year, and the present contractor is said to make about \$50,000 a year from the rags, papers, old bottles, rubber, etc., that his Italian pickers deftly lift from the great revolving belt on the sorting dumps. Much of the city rubbish is burned in municipal power houses and the power is sold to neighboring factories. The ash from these fires is charged with ammonia and potash and for that reason is valuable as a fertilizer for the trees in Central Park, though it is more often sold to soap makers who want the potash. Ashes were once a great bother to New York. Up to five years ago they were used with rubbish on land fills or cast into the sea. Then it was decided to take those not sold and use with other refuse in land building. As a result Riker's Island will have sixty-three acres of land when the entire surface is filled in, and the city be richer by \$630,000 in real estate. Much of the city's ashes is purchased by construction companies for use in making fireproof floors in department stores. As the city has over 3,000,000 cubic yards a year to dispose of, and the price paid is from twelve to twenty cents a cubic foot, it would be a profitable commodity to handle. Ashes instead of sand make excellent lime mortar for construction work on fireproof buildings. If all the unburned coal were separated from the ashes in a city of 50,000 inhabitants, it would net \$8,000 a year to that city.

Roskilde, where King Christian was buried, is about twenty

miles from Copenhagen. When the Danes were still sailing up our English river, pillaging our land, a wooden church was built here by King Harald, and this in the thirteenth century was replaced by the red brick building of to-day. The exterior is plain, but rugged and impressive; in the interior the nave is simple, and the choir rises light and boldly beyond. This is the "Westminster Abbey" of Denmark, and in the chapels and the aisles are buried the illustrious dead whose names give us an epitome of Danish history. Around the choir are the monuments of the early Viking kings, commencing with the founder's, whose inscription is: "Haraldus, rex Danie, Anglie, et Norvegie, primus founder hujus ecclesie." Behind the altar is the elaborate tomb of "the illustrious Princess Margarët," who in the fifteenth century ruled over Denmark, Norway and Sweden. There is a fine statue in alabaster of the Queen on the black marble sarcophagus. In the northern chapel are the coffins of the early Oldenburg line. Some are of copper with crucifixes and crowns on them; others are covered in velvet, with silver work upon them. Here lies Christian IV, a mighty builder, who built this chapel, placed the spires on the church, and whose work we see to-day in Frederiksborg Castle and in the smaller Rosenborg Castle at Copenhagen. Here, by the side of his wife, Christian IX found his resting place.

OUR COMIC COLUMN.

"I can't understand why she isn't happy with him. He's certainly very attentive to her." "That's just it. She argues that he couldn't be so attentive to her if he hadn't had a lot of experience before with someone else."

Man of the House (in a loud and angry voice)—Confound it! Shut that door, you, out there! Shut that door right away! Servant (appearing with dignity)—Do yez know who yez is hollerin' at? Man of the House (collapsed)—Oh, excuse me, Bridget! I thought it was my wife.

"Don't you remember me? Why, we went to school together." "Surely it must be my mother you are thinking of." "Oh, no; it was your mother who told you you should be ashamed to go with girls so much younger than you." (Etc., etc., etc.)

The frog, in trying to be as big as the ox, had inflated itself until it burst, substantially as related in the standard historical works. "H'm!" exclaimed the ox. "That's the worst case of exaggerated ego I ever saw." Meanwhile the frog, as such, had disappeared, and being unable to collect itself it attempted no reply.

After King Solomon had offered to cut the famous infant in half the mothers were so tickled over his tact they wanted to elect him judge of the next baby show. "Not for mine!" exclaimed Solomon. "But we thought you were so wise." "I am, ladies; and that is the very reason why I decline to be judge."

"Sergt. Day was as regimental as a buttonstick. "Shun!" he cried to his squad. "Quick march! Left wheel! Halt! Take Murphy's name for talking in the ranks." "But he wasn't talking," protested a corporal who was standing near. "Wasn't he?" roared Sergt. Day. "Don't matter, then. Cross it out, and put him in the guard room for deceiving me!"

A most bloodthirsty drama was being performed. The father of the leading woman came as usual to the stage door and asked the doorkeeper: "Has my daughter gone yet?" "No, she is still on the stage; she will not die for some minutes." "Will you be kind enough to tell her as soon as she is dead that I am waiting for her at the theater cafe?"

A Locomotive Hero

By JOHN SHERMAN.

Well, gentlemen, if you wish it, I'll tell you the story. When I was a youth of nineteen and lived with my parents in a Pennsylvania town, I had a taste for railroading, and a boyish ambition to become a driver, although I had been educated for loftier pursuits.

During my college vacation I lounged about the station almost constantly, making friends with the trainmen, and especially with a driver named Silas Markley. I became much attached to this man, notwithstanding he was forty years old, and by no means a sociable fellow.

He was my ideal of a brave, skillful, thoroughbred driver, and I looked up to him as something of a hero. He was not a married man, but lived alone with his old mother. I was a frequent visitor at their house, and I think they both took quite a fancy to me in their quiet, undemonstrative way.

When Markley's fireman left him, I induced him to let me take his place during the remainder of my vacation. He hesitated for some time before he consented to humor my boyish whim, but he finally yielded, and I was in great glee. The fact was, that in my idleness and the overworked state of my brain, I craved the excitement as a confirmed drunkard does liquor, and besides, I had such longing dreams of the fiery ride through the hills, mounted literally on the iron horse. So I became an expert more than compensated for the rough work I was required to do.

But there came a time when I got my fill of excitement. Mrs. Markley one day formed a plan which seemed to give her a good deal of happiness. It was her son's birthday; and she wanted to go down to Philadelphia in the train without letting him know anything about it, and there purchase a present for him. She took me into her confidence and had me assist her. I arranged the preliminaries, and got her into the train without being noticed by Markley, who, of course, was busy with his engine.

The old lady was in high glee over the bit of innocent deception she was practicing on her son. She enjoined me again not to tell Silas, and then I left her and took my place.

It was a midsummer day, and the weather was delightful. The train was neither an express nor an accommodation, but one which stopped at the principal stations on the route.

On this occasion, as there were two specials on the line, it was run by telegraph; that is, the driver has simply to obey the instructions which he receives at each station, so that he is but as a machine in the hands of one controller, who directs all trains from a central point and has the whole line under his eye.

Well, we started without mishap and up to time, and easily reached the first station in the time allotted to us. As we stopped there a boy ran alongside with the telegram, which he handed to the driver. The next moment I heard a smothered exclamation from Markley.

"Go back," he said to the boy; "tell Williams to have the message repeated; there's a mistake."

The boy dashed off; in ten minutes he came flying back. "Had it repeated," he panted; "Williams is storming at you; says there's no mistake, and you'd best get on." He thrust the second message up as he spoke.

Markley read it, and stood hesitating for half a minute. There was dismay and utter perplexity in the expression of his face as he looked at the telegram and the long train behind him. His lips moved as if he were calculating chances, and his eyes suddenly quailed as if he saw death at the end of the calculation. I was watching him with considerable curiosity. I ventured to ask him what was the matter, and what he was going to do.

"I'm going to obey," he replied, curtly. The engine gave a long shriek of horror that made me start as if it was Markley's own voice. The next instant we rushed out of the station and dashed through low-lying farms at a speed which seemed dangerous to me.

"Put on more coal," said Markley.

I shoveled it in, but took time.

The fields and houses began to fly past half seen. We were nearing Dufreme, the next station. Markley's eyes went from the gauge to the face of the timepiece and back. He moved like an automaton. There was little more meaning in his face.

I was alarmed at the stern, cold rigidity of the man. His pallor was becoming frightful. I threw in the coal. At least we must stop at Dufreme. That was the next halt. The little town approached. As the first house came into view, the engine sent its shrieks of warning, it grew louder—louder.

We dashed into the street, up to the station where a group of passengers waited, and passed it without the halt of an instant, catching a glimpse of the appalled faces and the waiting crowd. Then we were in the field again. The speed now became literally breathless, the furnace glared red-hot. The heat, the velocity, the terrible nervous strain of the man beside me, seemed to weight the air. I found myself drawing long stentorious breaths like one drowning.

I heaped in the coal at intervals as he bade me. I did it because I was oppressed by an odd sense of duty which I never had in my ordinary brainwork. Since then I have understood how it is that dull, ignorant men, without a spark of enthusiasm, show such heroism as soldiers, firemen and captains of wrecked vessels. It is this overpowering sense of routine duty. It's a finer thing than sheer bravery in my idea. However, I began to think that Markley was mad—laboring under some frenzy from drink, though I had never seen him touch liquor.

He did not move hand or foot, except in the mechanical control of his engine, his eyes going from the gauge to the time-piece with a steadiness that was more terrible and threatening than any gleam of insanity would have been. Once he glared back at the long train sweeping after the engine with a headlong speed that rocked it from side to side.

One could imagine he saw hundreds of men and women in the carriages, talking, reading, smoking, unconscious that their lives were all in the hold of one man, whom I now strongly suspected to be mad. I knew by his look that he remembered their lives were in his hand. He glanced at the clock.

"Twenty miles," he muttered. "Throw on more coal, Jack; the fire is going out."

I did it—yes, I did it. There was something in the face of that man I could not resist. Then I climbed forward and shook him by the shoulder.

"Markley," I shouted, "you are running this train into the jaws of death."

"I know it," he replied, quietly.

"Your mother is aboard this train."

"Heavens!"

He staggered to his feet. But even then he did not remove his eyes from the gauge.

"Make up the fire," he commanded, and pushed in the throttle-valve.

"I will not."

"Make up the fire, Jack," very quietly.

"I will not. You may murder yourself and mother, but you shall not murder me."

He looked at me. His kindly gray eyes glared like those of a wild beast. But he controlled himself a moment.

"I could throw you off this engine and make short work of you," he said. "But look here, do you see the station yonder?"

I saw a faint streak against the sky about five miles ahead.

"I was told to reach that station by six o'clock," he continued. "The express train meeting us is due now. I ought to have laid by for it at Dufreme. I was told to come on. The track is a single one. Unless I can make the siding at the station in three minutes we shall meet in yonder hollow."

"Somebody's blunder?" I said.

"Yes, I think so."

I said nothing. I threw on coal; if I had had petroleum I should have thrown it on; but never was calmer in my life.

When death actually stares a man in the face, it often frightens him into the most perfect composure. Markley pushed the valve still further. The engine began to give a strange panting sound. Far off to the south I could see the bituminous black smoke of a train. I looked at Markley inquiringly. He nodded. It was the express! I stooped to the fire.

"No more," he said.

I looked across the clear summer sky at the gray smoke of the peaceful little village, and beyond that at a black line coming closer, closer, across the sky. Then I turned to the watch. In one minute more—well, I confess I sat down and buried my face in my hands. I don't think I tried to pray. I had a confused thought of mangled, dying men and women—mothers and their babies.

There was a terrible shriek from the engine against which I leaned. Another in my face. A hot, hissing tempest swept past me. I looked up. We were on the siding, and the express had gone by. It grazed our end carriage in passing. In a sort of delirious joy I sprang up and shouted to Markley. He did not speak. He sat there immovable and cold as a stone. I went to the train and brought his mother to him, and when he opened his eyes and took the old lady's hand in his I turned away.

Yes, gentlemen, I have been in many a railway accident, but I have always considered that the closest shave I ever had.

"What was the blunder?"

I don't know. Markley made light of it ever afterward and kept it a secret, but no man on the line stood so high in the confidence of the company after that as he. By his coolness and nerve he had saved a hundred lives.

THE ARMY SCOUT

It is extremely doubtful if there is any one subject on which the average reader is more ignorant than that of scouts and scouting. The commonly accepted view of the army scout is very much that entertained by the schoolboy reader of the dime novel who wants to go out West and kill Indians. The views of the dime novelist as to Western Indian killers have not been modified but rather confirmed by the exhibitions of Wild West shows with which the names of Buffalo Bill, Captain Jack Crawford and Dr. Carver are so intimately associated. But neither the dime novelist striving after sensation, nor the proprietors of a Wild West show give anything except the most exaggerated idea of a class of men now rapidly disappearing and of which, with the advancement of civilization, only the memory will be left fifty years hence.

The scout of the novel and the show is a very picturesque kind of fellow, thoroughly reckless, a dead shot, the proprietor of a varied selection of scalps, and showing in his moral character that combination of "half angel and half Lucifer," of which Joaquin Miller delights to sing.

Like Samson of old, his strength is in his hair, and his long flowing locks are the admiration of frontier women and the envy of frontier men. He is always clad in buckskin, fringed and stamped with grotesque designs, while his flowing locks are surmounted with a sombrero that it would take three days to walk round the brim. Such is the Eastern conception; now for Southwestern reality.

The United States scout in active service wears his hair cut short, in soldier fashion, because he has to sleep on the ground for weeks at a time, and if he wore long and flowing locks they would give him considerable trouble by affording a choice variety of insects a refuge and a dwelling place. He has no collection of scalps. In five years' experience, during which I met nearly every scout of note in New Mexico and in Arizona, I never found one of them with a single scalp except his own. Then again, outside of some town in which they wanted with a pardonable vanity to show off, I never saw one of them in a buckskin suit. It is too warm in summer and not warm enough in winter. The scout is a good

shot, but that is a virtue he shares in common with nearly every man and boy on the frontier.

There is very little romance, but plenty of hardship about the life of a scout. He is not selected for his dashing airs and reckless bravery, but for the only quality in demand with army officers, his thorough knowledge of the country in which the troops are to operate, and especially of the first camping grounds, the distances from water to water (a point on which the lives of the command often depend), and his power to shorten marches by his acquaintance with short cuts through mountains and over morasses. If he knows the Spanish language, so much the better, and if he can speak a little Apache, better still; but these latter accomplishments are of minor importance to a thorough knowledge of the country.

United States army scouts may be divided into two classes: White men, who rank as chief of scouts, and Indian scouts, who are organized as military companies. The white scouts are usually men who have been employes of the San Carlos and Mescalero Apache reservations or Indian agencies. They are from constant association with the Indians well acquainted with their character and habits, and frequently speak a little Apache. The Apaches, with few exceptions, speak Spanish, and it is usually the language they use in communication with the Indian agent and the employes of the agency. A white man who makes himself useful to the Indians by doing them little favors is, in time, taught "to read sign." This may be said to complete the education of a chief of scouts. It would be beyond the scope of a newspaper article to describe how "sign" is read, nor would anything save practical demonstration convey any comprehensive idea to the reader.

A scout who can read "sign" can tell you by examining a trail over which horses have passed if they were ridden or led, and if both, the number ridden and the number led. Even when shod he can tell whether the horses were American or Mexican. If the trail be made by men on foot, he can tell if it be an Indian trail or simply the trail of Mexicans wearing moccasins. In a hostile party he can tell by the trail how many are squaws and children, and so on over a field of observation as extensive as interesting.

The Indian scout companies are not popular on the frontier. They are considered to be only training schools for the hostiles, and as some of the most desperate of the Apaches have been scouts, such as Bonito and Chatto, the antipathy of the frontier men is not altogether without reason. The fact that the Indian scouts of the government are without uniform adds to the annoyance of the people of the frontier, who, except they see the Indians accompanied by a white man, cannot tell them from hostiles. The only thing distinctly worn by the Indian scout, outside the government belt that carries his ammunition, to distinguish him, is a red handkerchief bound round the head. The frontiersmen argue that red handkerchiefs are so common that no Indian, hostile or otherwise, need be without one. It is well known that the lack of uniform of the Indian scout is a source of perpetual danger on the border to Americans and Mexicans alike, and has cost the sacrifice of many lives.

Prof. George E. Stone, who is in charge of the work, writes as follows concerning the course in tree culture given at the Hatch Experiment Station of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass.: "At the present time we have seven senior students who are taking work in a course which I term the 'Physiology and Pathology of Shade Trees.' So far as I know this is the only course given in this country or anywhere else, and we are turning out quite a few young men who are especially trained to fill intelligently such positions as city foresters or helpers in parks. Many of our men at the present time have established firms for the care of trees, and all of them are meeting with remarkable success, some of them employing as many as 200 men. I started this course ten years ago at the request of students, and have been surprised at the way in which it has developed."

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